



# SCAM ALERT

April 2020

## COVID-19 / Coronavirus-Related Scams

### How the Scams Works:

- 1) Fraudulent letters threatening suspension of Social Security benefits due to COVID-19 or coronavirus-related office closures unless you call the phone number referenced in the letter. Scammers then mislead beneficiaries into providing personal information or payment via gift cards, wire transfers, internet, or by mailing cash, to maintain regular benefit payments during this period of COVID-19 office closures.
- 2) Centers for Disease Control (CDC) IMPERSONATORS (or other types of supposed health officials) going door-to-door offering COVID-19 testing (nasal swabs) in exchange for Medicare number, credit/debit card number, or cash, suggesting you should act quickly to “keep your family safe.”
- 3) Calls and online offers from health officials offering vaccinations and other treatments (pills, lozenges, lotions) for the cure of or treatment of coronavirus COVID-19.

### What you should know:

- ⇒ Social Security will not suspend, decrease or discontinue benefit payments due to the COVID-19 pandemic or because their offices are closed. Any communication you receive that says Social Security will do so is a scam, whether you receive it by letter, text, email, social media or phone call.
- ⇒ Your SS benefit payments will continue to be paid during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ⇒ Your physician or other trusted healthcare provider must prescribe any requests for COVID-19 testing.
- ⇒ There is no vaccine for COVID-19. There is no cure or treatment.
- ⇒ You do not have to do anything to receive the expected stimulus check from the Department of the Treasury.

### How to Respond:

- ◆ Never click on an e-mail link or attachment unless you fully trust the sender.
- ◆ Never pay someone you do not know with a gift card or wire transfer.
- ◆ If you receive a letter, text, call or email about an alleged problem with your Social Security number, Medicare number, or bank account, hang up or do not respond.
- The CDC nor health workers will not go door-to-door, email or call to offer a COVID-19 test or any treatment or vaccine for the virus. Be suspicious of any unexpected calls or visitors offering COVID-19 tests or supplies. If your personal information is compromised, it may be used in other fraud schemes.
- Please share this information with your friends and family, to spread awareness about these scams.
- ◆ If you suspect COVID-19 fraud, contact National Center for Disaster Fraud Hotline (866) 720-5721 or [disaster@leo.gov](mailto:disaster@leo.gov)

**REPORT all scams to the Arkansas SMP — 866-726-2916**



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