

## 2020 COMMON SCAMS

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Criminals find new ways to scam others almost daily. It's now more important than ever to do your due diligence before sharing any personal information or sending money of any kind to anyone. Below are some things to be aware of to avoid becoming a victim of fraudulent scams.

### **Criminals may contact you in multiple ways:**

- Phone, E-Mail, Text or U.S. Mail
- Scammers claim they have information about you and may even provide old passwords or addresses of places you have lived.

### **Before responding to anyone:**

- Only answer phone calls from known numbers.
- Do not provide personal information to anyone contacting you.
- If you have legitimate business, look up the contact information independently to confirm before responding.
- Scammers may be friendly, instill fear, appear helpful, or pressure you to act quickly.

### **Coronavirus Scams:**

- COVID-19 Scam: This scam email says you'll get money from a COVID-19 "Global Empowerment Fund." You will be directed to respond with your bank account information and they will promise to transfer the funds.
- Scammers pretending to be from the government can rig caller ID to look like the call is coming from a government agency. Government agencies usually will not call you, especially about something related to money. They almost always contact you by U.S. mail.
- Criminals may attempt to intercept unemployment benefits in your name.
- Criminals are selling products to treat or prevent COVID-19.
- Be wary of ads for COVID-19 test kits. Most test kits being advertised have **not** been approved by the FDA and may not be very accurate.

### **Other Scams and Spoofing:**

- Spoofing is when someone tricks you into believing they are someone else by using a matching phone number, similar email address, or web page that looks just like the legitimate business.
- Robocalls: Criminals pitch everything from low-priced health insurance to work-at-home schemes.
- Counterfeit Prescription Drugs: Offers for better prices on medicines.
- Funeral Scams: Overcharge on funeral costs or take advantage of a grieving spouse or other family member.
- Grandparent Scam: Criminals pretend to be a grandchild that needs money for an emergency.
- Internet Fraud: Fake virus pop-ups and phishing emails.

- Phishing Emails: Ask you to click a link or provide personal information.
- Medicare/Health Insurance/Social Security Scams: Try to extract personal information or threaten that you will lose benefits.
- Romance Scam: An online romantic interest asks you for money.
- Sweepstakes/Lottery Scams: Claims you won money, but you need to pay a fee in order to get your winnings.
- Tech Support: Poses as a legitimate company to fix your computer for a fee and may also ask to login to your computer remotely.
- Telemarketing/Phone Scams: Callers asking for personal information.
- Gift Card Payments: If anyone is asking you to make a payment in gift cards for anything, it is a scam.

Please report any crimes to the following agencies:

Internet Crime Complaint Center - [IC3.gov](http://IC3.gov)

Federal Trade Commission - [FTC.gov](http://FTC.gov)

Irvine Police Department – 949-724-7000 or Local Police Agency

Remember, if it sounds too good to be true, it's likely to be a scam. We hope the above warnings help you to avoid losing your money to criminals. Be diligent and alert.