ftc.gov/coronavirus

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Coronavirus Scams

Tips from the FTC

ftc.gov/coronavirus
Top COVID-related Reports/Complaints

- Online shopping
- Scam text messages
- Phone scams
Email/Text Scams & Malicious Websites

- **Phishing emails & texts**
  - Get your money
  - Get your information
  - Links to malware sites
- **Malicious websites**
  - Lots of domains including “Coronavirus”
  - Stick with known, trusted sites
- **Don’t click links from sources you don’t know**

![Fake email example]

**Re:SAFTY CORONA VIRUS AWARENESS WHO**

World Health Organization

Dear Sir,

Go through the attached document on safety measures regarding the spreading of coronavirus.

Click on the button below to download

[Safety measures]

Symptoms common symptoms include fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties.

Regards,

Dr. Stella Changong
Specialist in patient-virus-advisory

[FAKE]
Imposter Scams

- #1 fraud reported to Consumer Sentinel in 2019
- Government imposter scams:
  - Medicare
  - Relief payment messages
- Other imposters:
  - Family emergency
  - Tech support
  - Romance/Online dating
- FMI: Visit ftc.gov/imposters

Oh, the stories scammers tell . . .

Phony Social Security Administration – “Your Social Security number has been frozen, but we'll help you keep your money ‘safe’!”

Health & Human Services/Medicare con – “Call now for your free back brace!”

IRS imposter – “There’s a lawsuit against you for unpaid taxes.”

Fake government grant offer – “You’re eligible for a government grant . . . for a fee.”

Bogus police, sheriff, or FBI – “There is a warrant for your arrest for failing to appear in court!”
Treatments & Cures

- Miracle cures
- Medicare-related scams
Contact Tracing

FTC Consumer Alerts:

- COVID-19 contact tracing text message scams
- Help COVID-19 contact tracers, not scammers
COVID-19 Vaccines

- Vaccines will be distributed to federal- and state-approved locations.
- For most people living in the U.S., states and territories will make the final decisions on who will get the vaccines and when.
- States are also working on their own specific vaccination plans.
- Check with your state for specific information regarding distribution plans in your state.
- More information on where and how to get a COVID-19 vaccine will be available once vaccines are authorized and/or being shipped out.

Three Ways to Avoid COVID-19 Vaccine Scams

While vaccination details are getting worked out, here’s what you can be sure of:

- You can’t pay to put your name on a list to get the vaccine. That’s a scam.
- You can’t pay to get early access to the vaccine. That’s a scam.
- Nobody legit will call about the vaccine and ask for your Social Security, bank account, or credit card number. That’s a scam.

Ignore any vaccine offers that say different, or ask for personal or financial information.

Learn more at

[ftc.gov/coronavirus/scams](http://ftc.gov/coronavirus/scams)
[consumerresources.org/beware-coronavirus-scams](http://consumerresources.org/beware-coronavirus-scams)
Financial Impact Scams

- Job scams
- Home-based business opportunities
- Debt collection
Fake Charities

- Often appear with crises
- Before you give: do your homework
- If you give, never pay by cash, gift card or money transfer.
- Visit [ftc.gov/charity](http://ftc.gov/charity)
Misinformation & rumors

Ask yourself these 3 questions:

- Who is this message from?
- What do they want me to do?
- What is the evidence behind this message?

usa.gov/coronavirus
Reporting Fraud Helps Everyone

- The FTC just launched ReportFraud.ftc.gov — a new version of the FTC’s consumer reporting website.
Stay connected to stay informed

- For the latest news and information from the FTC:
  - Subscribe to our consumer alerts at ftc.gov/subscribe
  - Like us on our Facebook page at facebook.com/federaltradecommission
  - Follow @FTC for the latest tweets from the FTC
  - Visit consumer.ftc.gov for articles, blog posts, videos, and infographics on a range of consumer topics

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