

Coronavirus Scams

— What the FTC is Doing —

ftc.gov/coronavirus

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Coronavirus Scams

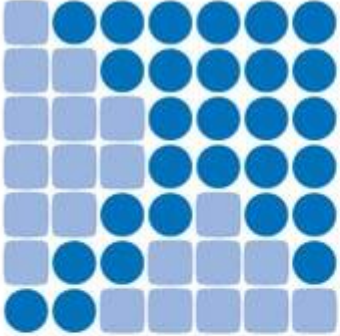
Tips from the FTC

ftc.gov/coronavirus

Source: Federal Trade Commission | FTC.gov

Top COVID-related Reports/Complaints

- ▶ Online shopping
- ▶ Scam text messages
- ▶ Phone scams



**Explore
Data**
with the **FTC**

**Track Coronavirus (COVID-19)
consumer complaints**

Source: Federal Trade Commission | [FTC.gov](https://www.ftc.gov)

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**



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](https://www.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!”

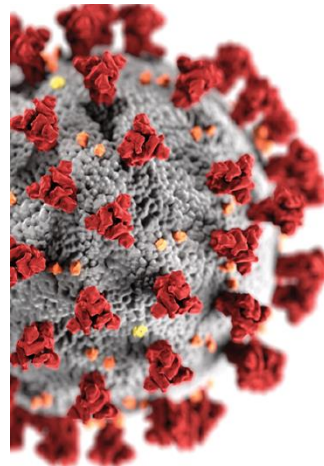
IRS imposter – *“There’s a lawsuit against you for unpaid taxes.”*

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**



Coronavirus cure?

Not so fast.

Learn the facts at
[ftc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.ftc.gov/coronavirus)

Source: Federal Trade Commission | [FTC.gov](https://www.ftc.gov)

Contact Tracing

FTC Consumer Alerts:

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

Contact tracing call?

5 things to know

A contact tracer from your state health department might call if you've been exposed to COVID-19. But scammers are pretending to be contact tracers, too. Here's how you can spot the scam.



Real contact tracers won't ask you for money.

Only scammers insist on payment by gift card, money transfer, or cryptocurrency.



Contact tracing doesn't require your bank account or credit card number.

Never share account information with anybody who contacts you asking for it.



Legitimate contact tracers will never ask for your Social Security number.

Never give any part of your Social Security number to anyone who contacts you.



Your immigration status doesn't matter for contact tracing, so real tracers won't ask.

If they do, you can bet it's a scam.



Do not click on a link in a text or email.

Doing so can download malware onto your device.

Talking to a real contact tracer helps stop the spread of COVID-19. Reporting scammers helps stop them, too. Report fake contact tracers to your state and at ftc.gov/complaint.



FEDERAL TRADE
COMMISSION

For more information about contact tracing visit your state health department's website and

ftc.gov/coronavirus/scams

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

consumerresources.org/beware-coronavirus-scams



Financial Impact Scams

- ▶ Job scams
- ▶ Home-based business opportunities
- ▶ Debt collection

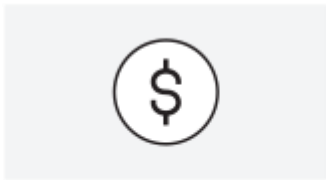


Fake Charities

- ▶ 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](https://www.ftc.gov/charity)



Research the charity



How much goes to the charity?



Look up the ratings/report

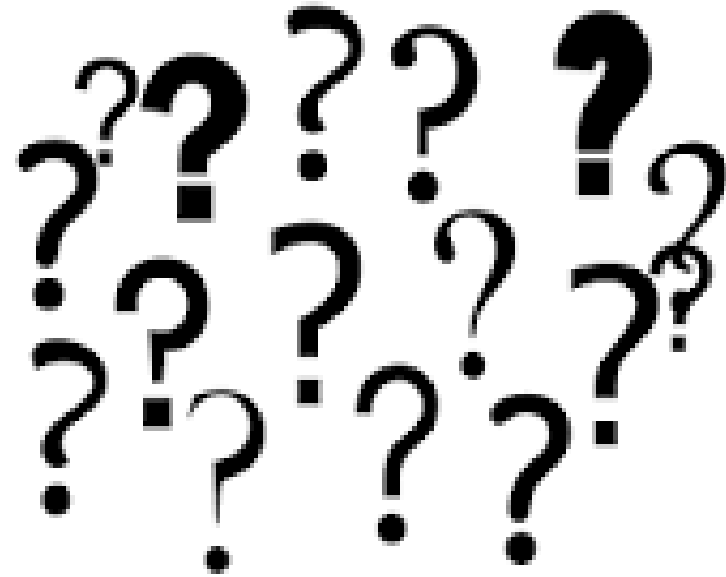


Never pay by gift card or wire transfer

Misinformation & rumors

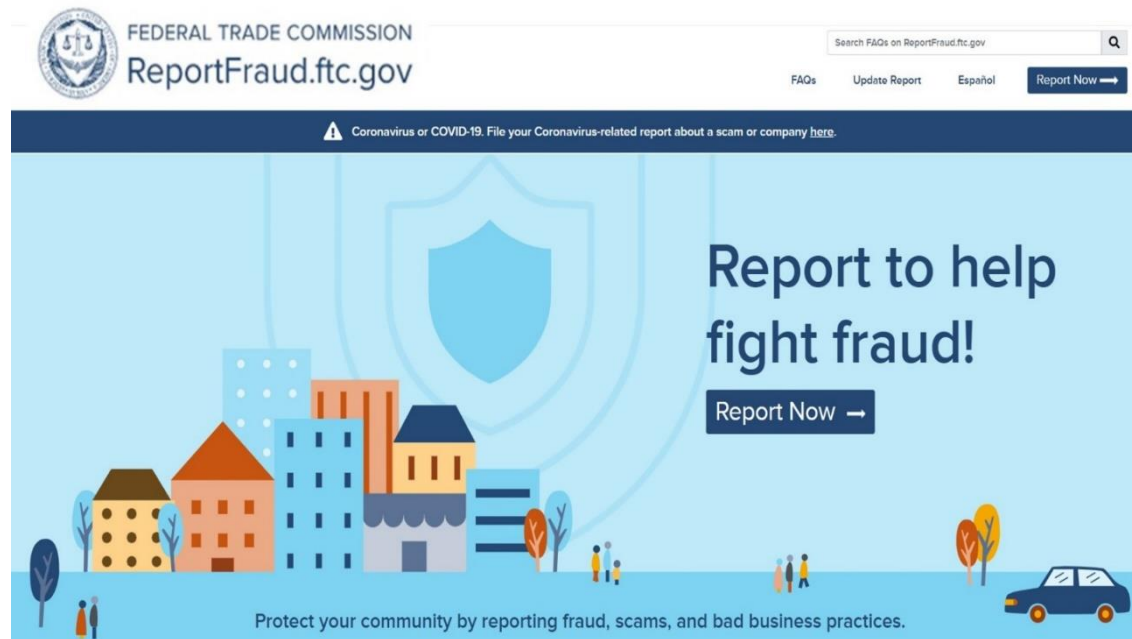
Ask yourself these 3 questions:

- ▶ Who is this message from?
- ▶ What do they want me to do?
- ▶ What is the evidence behind this message?
- ▶ [usa.gov/coronavirus](https://www.usa.gov/coronavirus)



Reporting Fraud Helps Everyone

- ▶ The FTC just launched **ReportFraud.ftc.gov** — a new version of the FTC’s consumer reporting website



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