

Scam Alert

The Covid-19 pandemic, federal stimulus checks, high unemployment and the 2020 Census all provide numerous opportunities to trick us and take advantage of us.

Scammers pose as government agencies, grandchildren, utility companies, online sellers, fake charities, employment agencies and more. They ask us to get gift cards, send money, give them personal information, or push a button. Sometimes they threaten us, and sometimes they promise us money. Here are some general guidelines:

- **Know that the government will never call, text, or contact you on social media saying you owe money.**
- **Visit websites directly for trustworthy information. Don't click on links in an email or text message, even if it looks legitimate.**
- **Say NO to anyone requesting unusual payment methods such as cash, gift cards, wire transfers, or bitcoin.**
- **Don't share your Social Security, Medicare ID, driver's license, bank account, or credit card numbers unless you are certain of who you are talking to. The best way to do that is to initiate the contact yourself after verifying the given phone number or email is legitimate.**
- **Be suspicious of calls or letters that use fear or intimidation to get you to take immediate action without thinking or checking with another person. Always take time to check with another person!**

Click here for to read about recent scams and how to recognize the warning signs.

<https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/features/scam-alerts>

Report any scams to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at [ftc.gov/complaint](https://www.ftc.gov/complaint) or at 877-382-4357. Also report scams to the Attorney General's Office Elder Hotline at 888-243-5337.