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OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

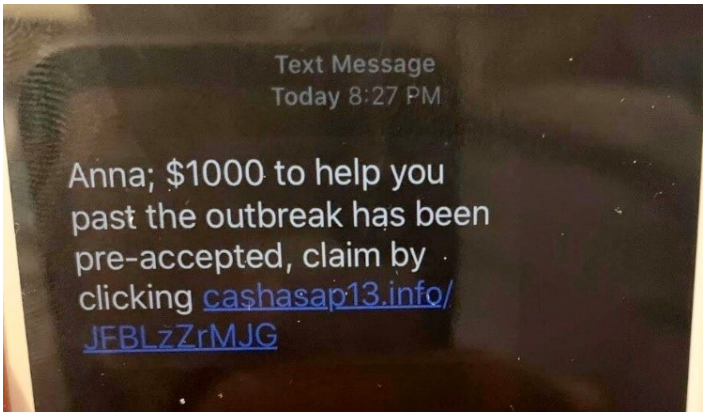
CA: New COVID-19 Related Scams Emerge



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today issued a Consumer Alert about new scams related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The scams run the gamut from text messages and phone calls to imposters posing as health workers offering free COVID-19 tests. The bottom line is Floridians need to be on the lookout for scams and never give out personal or financial information to solicitors.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “Sadly, scammers never stop trying to make a dishonest dollar—not even amid a pandemic. If you receive an unsolicited text message, email, phone call or any other communication claiming a cash payment, government benefit or other COVID-19 related offer, be very suspicious. Guard your personal and financial information and report scams to my office.”

Over the weekend, reports emerged of text messages asking people to click on a link to claim a $1,000 payment, apparently connected to a COVID-19 federal stimulus package. The link most likely contained malware. Never click on any links in unsolicited messages.



Several South Florida law enforcement agencies are issuing alerts about people dressed in white lab coats and masks impersonating Centers for Disease Control and Prevention workers. The imposters are reportedly knocking on doors and offering free COVID-19 tests. The CDC is not sending people door-to-door to test for COVID-19. If a CDC impersonator shows up at your door, do not let them in. Close the door and call 911.

The U. S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General is reporting a scam involving fraudsters calling older Americans and offering to mail them free COVID-19 test kits. The scammers claim all they need from the senior to send the free kit is the target's Medicare number. Never provide health information, or any other personal information, in response to an unsolicited phone call.

COMMENTS

Comment	Redacted
THE OIG HOTLINE RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING TIP: THE FRAUDSTER ASKED MY MOTHER (90 YEARS OLD) TO PROVIDE HER NEW MEDICARE ID # SO THEY CAN SEND A "FREE" CORONAVIRUS TEST KIT GIVEN SHE HAS RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS (INFORMATION THAT IS PRIVATE AND SHE BELIEVED WOULD ONLY BE KNOWN BY SOMEONE LEGITIMATELY WORKING FOR MEDICARE). THEY WENT ON TO SAY THAT THIS IS MANDATED BY PRESIDENT TRUMP AND VICE PRESIDENT PENCE. GIVEN THE CURRENT COVID-19 CIRCUMSTANCE IN OUR COUNTRY, IT WAS EASY TO BE CONVINCED. IT IS OBVIOUSLY FRAUD. SHAME ON THESE PEOPLE.	NO

These are just a few of the latest scams emerging as the COVID-19 virus continues to spread. Floridians should be reminded that if an offer seems too good to be true, then it is probably a scam.

Last week, Attorney General Moody issued another Consumer Alert warning of several other COVID-19 related scams. To view the previous alert, click here.

Attorney General Moody has also activated Florida's Price Gouging Hotline in response to the COVID-19 state of emergency. Consumers suspicious of price gouging can report it by calling 1(866) 9NO-SCAM or by visiting MyFloridaLegal.com.

Price gouging can also be reported to the Attorney General's Office by downloading the free NO SCAM app in the Android or Apple app store. For a list of the commodities covered under the state's price gouging laws during the COVID-19 state of emergency, click here.

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The Florida Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division issues Consumer Alerts to inform Floridians of emerging scams, new methods used to commit fraud, increased reports of common scams, or any other deceptive practice. Consumer Alerts are designed to notify Floridians about scams and available refunds in an effort to prevent financial losses or other harm caused by

deceptive practices. Anyone encountering a scam should report the incident to the Florida Attorney General's Office by calling 1(866) 9NO-SCAM or visiting MyFloridaLegal.com. To view recent Consumer Alerts and for other information about avoiding scams, visit MyFloridaLegal.com/ConsumerAlert.