

COVID-19 RELATED SCAMS

BEWARE OF SCAMMERS

Scammers are exploiting the fear and isolation people are feeling during the COVID-19 shelter-in-place. Beware of scammers posing as government officials, bank employees, or health professionals. They want your money and sensitive personal information, including Social Security number, Medicare number, credit card information, and bank account information.



HOW SCAMMERS CAN REACH YOU



PHONE



SOCIAL MEDIA



EMAIL



WEBSITES



IN PERSON

COMMON SCAMS



- Sell you fake respiratory masks, COVID-19 testing or vaccine kits, or COVID-19 cures.



- Ask for charity donations. You can look up charities at [give.org](https://www.give.org) or [charitynavigator.org](https://www.charitynavigator.org).



- Promise direct deposit of your stimulus check.
- Tell you your Social Security check has been cancelled due to COVID-19 and try to get your personal information to verify.



- Offer “relief money” to those affected by COVID-19.
- Say a loved one has contracted COVID-19 and needs money wired for their treatment.



- Contact you pretending to be from the WHO, CDC, or a volunteer agency.
- Ask you to download a mobile app that tracks and sends you COVID-19 updates.

REPORT SUSPECTED ELDER ABUSE

If you suspect someone you know may be a victim of elder abuse, call the **Santa Clara Adult Protective Services** 24-hour/7-days-a-week hotline at **408-975-4900**.



RED FLAGS



- A sense of urgency. Scammers will use the words “urgent”, “act now”, “important”, and “official” to pressure you into acting quickly.



- Asking for payment via wire transfer or gift cards.
- Requesting your Social Security number, Medicare number, credit card information, or bank account information.



- Links from unknown or unverified sources.
- Purported government agencies contacting you by phone, email, or social media.



- Emails from personal accounts – beware of emails from Yahoo, Hotmail, Gmail, AOL addresses, etc.
- Websites that look like important COVID-19 news and information sources. These sites could install malware on your computer that damage your computer or gain unauthorized access to your information.



- Unverified apps. These apps can lock your phone and steal data from your device. Only download apps with a verified publisher from Google Play or Apple Store.

LEGAL REFERRALS



- **Senior Adults Legal Services** – sala.org 408-295-5991
- **Santa Clara County Office of the District Attorney, Elder and Dependent Adult Financial Crimes Unit** – / sccgov.org/sites/da/prosecution/DistrictAttorneyDepartments/Pages/Elderfraudunit.aspx 855-323-5337
- **Santa Clara County D.A. Consumer Mediation Hotline** – <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/da/prosecution/DistrictAttorneyDepartments/Pages/Consumerprotectionunit.aspx> 408-792-2880 to report price gouging and COVID-related scams
- **Pro Bono Project** – probonoproject.org 408-998-5298
- **Bay Area Legal Aid** – baylegal.org/get-help/find-an-office/santa-clara-county/ 800-551-5554
- **Santa Clara County Bar Association** – sccbba.community.lawyer/
- **Housing and Economic Rights Advocates (HERA)** – heraca.org/ 510-271-8443



STAY CONNECTED



- **Covia’s Well Connected and Social Call programs:** Activities and educational programs via phone, volunteer matching for social conversations – covia.org/ 877-797-7299
- **Institute on Aging’s Friendship Line:** Emotional support, well-being checks, support for those grieving loss, and referrals for people over 60 and adults with disabilities – ioaging.org/ 888-670-1360