

# How to Recognize and Protect Yourself from COVID-19 Scams

While most people are distracted with keeping a routine amidst the chaos, there are others out there who are looking to take advantage of people's fear. Because seniors are predominantly the most targeted group for these types of scams and phishing attempts, here are some things to look out for in the coming weeks and months.



Don't respond to phone calls, texts, or emails from the "government". Remember: the government will never text or call you to ask for personal information or money.



Be wary of out-of-character emails, phone calls and texts messages that may appear to come from friends and family. This has been especially prevalent on the "Next Door" app. If you are unsure, contact your friends and family to verify that the message was truly from them.



Don't click on links from any sources or senders you don't know. They could download a virus or malware onto your computer or mobile device.



Be sure to fact-check any information regarding donations. Don't let anyone rush you into making a donation. If someone wants donations in cash, by gift card, or by wiring money, don't do it. If you would like to donate, the World Health Organization has set up [this COVID-19 response fund](#).



Ignore any online offers for vaccinations or at-home test kits. There are currently no vaccines, pills, lozenges, or other prescription or over-the-counter products available to treat or cure COVID-19. There are also no FDA-authorized at-home test kits.



Fact-check any information that feels "off". Scammers and well-meaning people alike share information that hasn't been verified and could be dangerous. Before you pass on any of these messages, visit a trusted source like [usa.gov](#).



Don't allow anyone into your home or residence that you don't know. There are reports of people impersonating Red Cross volunteers and offering free COVID-19 tests. The Red Cross has confirmed that it is not instructing volunteers to visit people door-to-door.



Report and delete any extortion emails that threaten to infect you and your loved ones with COVID-19.



Be wary of opportunists who are making robocalls to offer HVAC duct cleaning as a way to "protect" your home from the virus.

For more information on how to recognize and protect yourself from COVID-19 scams, please visit the following resources:

- [Federal Communications Commission COVID-19 Consumer Warnings & Safety Tips](#)
- [Federal Trade Commission Coronavirus Scams](#)
- [U.S. Department of Justice COVID-19 Fraud](#)

If you think you may have been a victim of a COVID-19 scam, contact law enforcement immediately.