



# Better Business Bureau Alert

## COVID-19 Scams Targeting Seniors

### ***Why are seniors being targeted for coronavirus-related scams?***

- Seniors are often targets of scams because, although they are more likely to walk away from a potential scam, they often lose more money to scams.
- Seniors lost an average of \$350 to scams in 2019.
- They are also more at risk for severe illness from COVID-19 than other demographics, which can make them more vulnerable to scams as they look to protect themselves.

### ***Which scams are seniors reporting?***

- In one scam, seniors receive texts from someone claiming to be from the Department of Health, telling them online COVID-19 texts are mandatory to receive their stimulus checks.
- Another version reported includes seniors getting emails with links that claim to allow them to check their eligibility status for stimulus payments.
- Many scammers are impersonating officials from government agencies such as the U.S. Department of Health and the Social Security Administration.

### ***What advice does BBB have for seniors to avoid scams?***

- **Contact someone.** Reach out to trusted friends, relatives and financial advisor for guidance if you receive a call or email you're unsure of. If a scammer tries to keep you on the phone or rush you into a decision, hang up and reach out for advice.
- **Avoid outrageous claims.** Companies are targeting seniors by promoting products that claim to cure or prevent COVID-19. However, these products are using false advertising, as COVID-19 has no proven cure or FDA-approved vaccines. Research the company at BBB.org before buying from them.
- **Beware of too good to be true offers.** Scammers will try to target seniors whose retirement has been affected by the current economic climate. Offers that seem too good to be true probably are. Take time to reach out to your trusted financial advisor before reassessing your finances.
- **Stay smart.** Simply being aware of scams can help prevent you from falling victim. Visit BBB.org/coronavirus for marketplace tips and scam alerts surrounding the COVID-19 crisis. You can see what scams are happening in your area at BBB.org/ScamTracker.



***Heather Massey***  
***Senior Regional Director***  
***Better Business Bureau***