

FCC Warns of COVID-19 Scams

March 24, 2020

The FCC launched a new [website](#) to educate businesses and consumers about phone scammers that are using the COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity to take advantage of vulnerable populations. The website provides examples of phone and text message scams that have been reported to the agency, including reports of scammers offering free home testing kits, promoting fake cures, selling health insurance or targeting other virus-related concerns.

These scams may lead consumers to doubt the veracity of legitimate outreach from healthcare companies, local businesses, charitable organizations and government officials. For example, the FCC's website provides a recording of a scammer trying to offer a complimentary COVID-19 testing kit with diabetes medication and medical equipment. As a result, companies should follow their standard operating procedures as they reach out to their consumers with COVID-19 related updates but anticipate that consumers may begin to question such outreach.

The FCC suggests the following steps that consumers and businesses can take to protect against telephone scams, including coronavirus scams:

- Do not respond to calls or texts from unknown numbers, or any others that appear suspicious.
- Never share personal or financial information via email, text messages or over the phone.
- Be cautious if you're being pressured to share any information or make a payment immediately.
- Scammers often [spoof phone numbers](#) to trick you into answering or responding. Remember that government agencies will never call you to ask for personal information or money.
- Do not click any links in a text message. If a friend sends you a text with a suspicious link that seems out of character, call them to make sure they weren't hacked.
- Always check on a charity (for example, by calling or looking at its actual website) before donating.

If you are contacted by a suspected telephone scammer, you can notify the FCC at www.fcc.gov/complaints.

Coronavirus Resource Hub

This content is provided for general informational purposes only, and your access or use of the content does not create an attorney-client relationship between you or your organization and Cooley LLP, Cooley (UK) LLP, or any other affiliated practice or entity (collectively referred to as "Cooley"). By accessing this content, you agree that the information provided does not constitute legal or other professional advice. This content is not a substitute for obtaining legal advice from a qualified attorney licensed in your jurisdiction, and you should not act or refrain from acting based on this content. This content may be changed without notice. It is not guaranteed to be complete, correct or up to date, and it may not reflect the most current legal developments. Prior results do not guarantee a similar outcome. Do not send any confidential information to Cooley, as we do not have any duty to keep any information you provide to us confidential. When advising companies, our attorney-client relationship is with the company, not with any individual. This content may have been generated with the assistance of artificial intelligence (AI) in accordance with our AI Principles, may be considered Attorney Advertising and is subject to our [legal notices](#).

Key Contacts

Henry Wendel Washington, DC	hwendel@cooley.com +1 202 776 2943
--------------------------------	---------------------------------------

J.G. Harrington Washington, DC	jgharrington@cooley.com +1 202 776 2818
-----------------------------------	--

This information is a general description of the law; it is not intended to provide specific legal advice nor is it intended to create an attorney-client relationship with Cooley LLP. Before taking any action on this information you should seek professional counsel.

Copyright © 2023 Cooley LLP, 3175 Hanover Street, Palo Alto, CA 94304; Cooley (UK) LLP, 22 Bishopsgate, London, UK EC2N 4BQ. Permission is granted to make and redistribute, without charge, copies of this entire document provided that such copies are complete and unaltered and identify Cooley LLP as the author. All other rights reserved.