

Protect the Elderly from Scams, Old and New – COVID-19

4/14/2020

AVOID CORONAVIRUS SCAMS – FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION CONSUMER INFORMATION

- Don't respond to texts, emails or calls about checks from government.
- Ignore online offers for vaccinations and home test kits.
- Hang up on robocalls.
- Watch for emails claiming to be from Centers for Disease Control (CDC) or World Health Organization (WHO).
- Do your homework when it comes to donations.

TIPS FROM THE BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU TO AVOID BECOMING THE VICTIMS OF A CORONAVIRUS SCAM

- Report price gouging to [BBB.org/AdTruth](https://www.bbb.org/adtruth).
- Think twice before you click. In a reported recent scam, consumers received SMS messages saying a mandatory online coronavirus test was necessary, one they could complete by clicking the link.
- Do your homework. Even if a call or message seems to come from an official source, research it before handing over sensitive information such as your name, address, or banking information.
- Don't accept calls from strangers.
- Avoid any "miracle cures."
- Watch out for employment and unemployment scams. If you are looking for work and find an online job offer that sounds too good to be true, beware.
- Research before you donate. Check with [Give.org](https://www.give.org) to verify the trustworthiness of the soliciting charity.
- Be alert to stimulus payment scams. To get the latest updates on economic impact payments, check the official [irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov) website regularly.

CONSUMER TIPS FROM THE NEBRASKA ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE

- Seniors may be targeted more because they are perceived by scam artists to have more free time, a willingness to talk, or may be more trusting.
- If someone calls claiming to be affiliated with Medicare/Medicaid in order to provide you with Coronavirus-related benefits, it's a scam. Hang up and report the imposter at 1-800-Medicare and [ftc.gov/complaint](https://www.ftc.gov/complaint).
- Beware that wiring money is just like sending cash. Once you send it, it is gone for good. The same applies to sending money using prepaid cards.
- Strengthen Caller ID with the addition of at least two calling features: Anonymous Call Rejection and Selective Call Rejection. Virtually, all telephone carriers offer these services for a nominal additional fee, if any.
- Order your free credit report once a year through www.annualcreditreport.com



NEBRASKA LONG TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

If you are concerned about the safety and well-being of a spouse, parent, or other loved one who lives in a nursing home, contact the Nebraska Long Term Care Ombudsman.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, State Unit on Aging	402-471-2307
Area Agencies on Aging:	
- Aging Partners (Lincoln)	800-247-0938
- Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging (Omaha)	888-554-2711
- Northeast Nebraska Area Agency on Aging (Norfolk)	800-672-8368
- Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging (Beatrice)	888-989-9417
- Midland Area Agency on Aging (Hastings)	800-955-9714
- South Central Nebraska Area Agency on Aging (Kearney)	800-658-4320
- West Central Nebraska Area Agency on Aging (North Platte)	800-662-2961
- Aging Office of Western Nebraska (Scottsbluff)	800-682-2961
Adult Protective Services	800-652-1999
Nebraska Long Term Care Ombudsman Program	800-942-7830
Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) (Medicare & Medicaid Fraud)	877-808-2468
Nebraska Attorney General's Consumer Division	800-727-6432
Better Business Bureau	800-649-6814
National Do Not Call Registry	888-225-5322
Federal Trade Commission	877-382-4357
Free Credit Report	877-322-8228
Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)	844-843-6364
Opt-Out (Protect your credit by opting out of prescreened credit & Insurance offers)	888-567-8688

USEFUL WEBSITES

DHHS, State Unit on Aging	http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Aging-Legal-Services.aspx
Nebraska Association of Area Agencies on Aging	www.nebaaaa.org
Nebraska Attorney General's Consumer Website	www.ProtectTheGoodLife.nebraska.gov
Nebraska Long Term Care Ombudsman Program	http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Aging-Ombudsman.aspx
National Do Not Call Registry	www.donotcall.gov
Better Business Bureau	www.bbbnebraska.com
Federal Trade Commission	www.ftc.gov
Free Annual Credit Report	www.annualcreditreport.com
Mail and Email Preference Service	www.DMAchoice.org
Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)	https://nebraska.arounja.org
Opt-Out (Protect your credit by opting out of prescreened credit and insurance offers)	www.optoutprescreen.com
DHHS COVID-19 INFORMATION LINE 402-552-6645	www.dhhs.ne.gov/coronavirus