

# COVID-19 IMPACT



We all know first-hand how much of an impact COVID-19 is having on our daily routines. During this time of panic, anxiety, and fear, criminals are seeing opportunity. Stay educated and diligent on the ever-changing fraud schemes impacting consumers.

## CORONAVIRUS SCAMS

The growing anxiety from the COVID-19 pandemic is fueling Disaster Fraud. Fraudsters are using the coronavirus as an opportunity to scam consumers and financial institutions. Stay educated on the warning signs to better protect yourself from financial harm.

E-mail and text message phishing scams, disguised as the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO), are being circulated throughout the world. The messages contain malicious links that download malware. The malware gives cyber-criminals access to the victims' data. Advise Members to obtain information directly from the CDC or WHO website(s) and reputable sources.

Fundraising Scams are set-up by fake charities that solicit donations from consumers. They claim to be involved in fighting the spread of the coronavirus.

Scammers are targeting consumers and encouraging them to "reserve a COVID-19 vaccination over the phone". The scammer will obtain personal information from the victim, including credit card and social security numbers. They claim to be from the CDC, and they are reserving vaccines for "high-risk" individuals. There are NO vaccine reserve programs.

Fraudsters are preying on consumers by offering an "advance" on the **proposed** stimulus package from the U.S. Government. The criminal(s) contact consumers and claim that, for an upfront fee, they will wire the stimulus amount to the victim within hours or days. The fraudster obtains identifying and financial information from the victim and disappears.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has issued joint warning letters to at least SEVEN companies for "selling fraudulent products with claims to prevent, treat, mitigate, diagnose, or cure COVID-19.

Illegal price gouging on safety, cleaning, and treatment products is increasing daily. Be aware and diligent of scammers.



Criminals are targeting remote workers. Be aware of phishing e-mails and **never** click unknown attachments or files.