



NEWSRELEASE

STORY COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Paul H. Fitzgerald, Sheriff

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For Immediate Release

Date: April 17, 2020
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COVID-19 Scams

Sheriff Paul H. Fitzgerald wants to warn the public of increased scams related to the COVID-19 virus.

At a time when anxiety levels are higher than usual, scammers will use this opportunity to increase their efforts in various schemes. The Story County Sheriff's Office expects an increase in scams related to the stimulus checks from the U.S. Treasury Department. Sheriff Fitzgerald urges the public to remain vigilant to all scams and offers recommendations to avoid becoming a victim:

- **Government officials will not ask for your personal information. Ignore any solicitations for personal or financial information via phone, email, or text.**
- **Do not trust the caller ID number; with current technology, it is common for a scammer to make it appear the call is from a legitimate number.**
- **Do not fall prey to fake cures and treatments for COVID-19, as these can be extremely harmful to your health. Only accept medical treatment or virus testing from your doctor, pharmacist, or local health department.**
- **Be cautious with work-from-home schemes. Many fraudulent work-from-home scams will require you to pay them first in return for a job. Legitimate jobs will not ask you to pay them.**

- Scammers will often pose as someone you would trust, such as a family member, bank, or law enforcement official. Be suspicious of any calls received asking for money or personal information.
- Scammers will pressure you to make decisions in a hurry and might even threaten you. Slow down, call someone you trust, and verify the information before proceeding.

If you have received a call you believe to be a scam and have provided personal or financial information, please report this to your local law enforcement. You may also make scam reports to <http://www.ftc.gov/complaint>. For more information on how to report and block unwanted numbers, visit <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/features/how-stop-unwanted-calls>.