

Helping HUD-assisted Residents Make the American Rescue Plan Work for Them

Economic Impact Payments, Resources, Scams and
What it Means for HUD-assisted Families





Predatory Practices Impacting Elders and People with Disabilities

Your Presenters:

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Predatory Practices Impacting Elders and People with Disabilities

HUD Webinar – April 20, 2021



Consumer Financial
Protection Bureau

CFPB's Office for Older Americans

The Office for Older Americans engages in research, policy, and educational initiatives, designed to:

- help protect older consumers from financial harm
- help older consumers make sound financial decisions as they age

Learn more about us at
consumerfinance.gov/olderamericans

COVID scams

consumerfinance.gov/coronavirus

- Central hub on consumerfinance.gov
- Resources in English and Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Tagalog
- Short videos
- Printer-friendly PDFs for Asian languages + MP3 audio files
- Check back for updates

The screenshot shows the CFPB website's coronavirus resource hub. At the top, there's a header with the CFPB logo, navigation links (Consumer Tools, Practitioner Resources, Data & Research, Policy & Compliance, About Us), and a search bar. Below the header, a large banner reads "Protecting your finances during the coronavirus pandemic" and states the CFPB's commitment to providing up-to-date information. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column lists resources: "Mortgage and housing assistance" (with a link to learn more), "Student loans" (with a link to find resources for borrowers), "Managing your finances" (with a link to see resources to help manage finances), and "Avoiding scams" (with a link to learn how to protect yourself). The right column features "FEDERAL CORONAVIRUS RESOURCES" including the "White House Coronavirus Task Force" (with a link to visit coronavirus.gov), "Centers for Disease Control and Prevention" (with a link to visit the CDC COVID-19 page), and "USAGov" (with links to visit usa.gov in English and Spanish). At the bottom, there's a "Featured videos" section with two video thumbnails.

COVID vaccine scams

- You can't pay to put your name on a list to get the vaccine sooner.
- Hang up if you get a call about the vaccine that asks for your Social Security, bank account or credit card number.
- Medicare covers the cost of the COVID vaccine.

Coronavirus healthcare scams

- Test kit offers
- Air filter systems
- Contact tracing scams

Contact tracing call?

5 things to know

A contact tracer from your state health department might call if you've been exposed to COVID-19. But scammers are pretending to be contact tracers, too. Here's how you can spot the scam.

-  **Real contact tracers won't ask you for money.**
Only scammers insist on payment by gift card, money transfer, or cryptocurrency.
-  **Contact tracing doesn't require your bank account or credit card number.**
Never share account information with anybody who contacts you asking for it.
-  **Legitimate contact tracers will never ask for your Social Security number.**
Never give any part of your Social Security number to anyone who contacts you.
-  **Your immigration status doesn't matter for contact tracing, so real tracers won't ask.**
If they do, you can bet it's a scam.
-  **Do not click on a link in a text or email.**
Doing so can download malware onto your device.

Talking to a real contact tracer helps stop the spread of COVID-19. Reporting scammers helps stop them, too. Report fake contact tracers to your state and at ftc.gov/complaint.

For more information about contact tracing visit your [state health department's website](https://www.health.state.tx.us/about/press/2020042001.html) and ftc.gov/coronavirus/scams

 FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

Government imposter scams

- Types
 - Social Security
 - Medicare
 - Economic Impact Payments (EIP)
- Tips
 - Government will not call about expediting your EIP.
 - Visit government websites directly. Don't click on links.
 - Say "NO" to anyone claiming to be from a government agency asking for cash, gift cards, wire transfer, cryptocurrency, or personal and financial information.

Errand helper scams

- Scammers offer help with errands, then run off with the money
- If you're an older adult:
 - Try to find a trusted friend or neighbor
 - If you order online, use a trusted seller
- If you're a caregiver:
 - Check in by phone or video chat
 - Ask questions
- If you need more help, contact the Eldercare Locator at eldercare.acl.gov or 1-800-677-1116

Mortgage relief scams

[← Mortgage and housing assistance](#)

Learn about mortgage relief options

[Find out which relief you may qualify for](#)

[Request forbearance or mortgage relief](#)

[What to do after you receive forbearance](#)

[Protections for renters](#)


Learn about mortgage relief options

A new federal law put in place two protections for homeowners with federally or Government Sponsored Enterprise (GSE)-backed mortgages. Learn more about these options and if they're right for your situation.

If you don't have a federally or GSE-backed mortgage, you still may have relief options through your mortgage loan servicer or from your state. [Find out who owns or services your mortgage.](#)

CARES Act Mortgage Forbearance: What You Need to Know

If you are experiencing a financial hardship due to the coronavirus national emergency, or having difficulty making on time mortgage payments, forbearance may be an option for you.



CARES Act

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11

The bottom line

- The best defense is to say NO if:
 - Anyone contacts you asking for your Social Security number, bank account number, credit card information, Medicare ID number, or drivers license number.
 - Anyone contacts you asking for any other personally identifiable information by phone, in person, by text message, or email.
 - Someone you don't know contacts you and requests money through a Peer to Peer (P2P) payment app like Venmo or Zelle or through pre-paid gift cards.

Cyber scams



Tech support
scams



Online dating
scams



Mortgage closing
scams

Online dating scams

Red Flags



- New love asks you to wire money for “emergency”
- New love asks you to access your bank or credit card accounts
- New sweetheart asks you to open joint account or co-sign a loan

Safeguards



- Never send money or gifts to a sweetheart you haven’t met in person
- Limit what personal information you share online and on dating apps
- Limit what personal information (like bank or credit card accounts, SSNs) you share with a new love.

Guard your wallet as well as your heart.

A romance scam is when a new love interest says they love you, but they really just love your money—and may not be who they say they are.



Be on the lookout for these warning signs of a romance scam:

- A new love who lives far away asks you to wire them money or share your credit card number with them—even if they say they'll pay you back.
- Your new romantic interest asks you to sign a document that would give them control of your finances or your house.
- Your new sweetheart asks you to open a new joint account or co-sign a loan with them.
- Your new darling asks for access to your bank or credit card accounts.

Report in-person romance scams to local law enforcement. Report online romance scams to [FTC.gov/complaint](https://www.ftc.gov/complaint).

Tech support scams

Red Flags



- Unsolicited call from “tech support” says they found a problem on your computer & need to remote in
- Unknown pop-up appears with phone number to call for “tech support”
- Unsolicited email about suspended account, with link (which installs malware)

Safeguards



- Never give control of your computer to someone who calls you out of the blue.
- Don’t click links in unsolicited pop-ups or emails.
- Keep anti-virus software up to date.

Play it safe online

Protect your personal information while you're online.

Being online lets you follow the news, connect with friends and family, shop, manage finances, and more. Consider these tips:

- Lock your devices just like you lock your front door. Use a passcode or fingerprint to lock your phone or tablet. If you have a computer, use a strong password that's at least 12 characters long.
- Know the red flags of scams. If someone contacts you and asks you to pay by wire transfer or gift card, be wary. It's probably a scam.
- Share with care. Limit how much personal information you share online. Set your social media profiles to private. If someone asks to connect with you on social media, only accept their request if you know them.

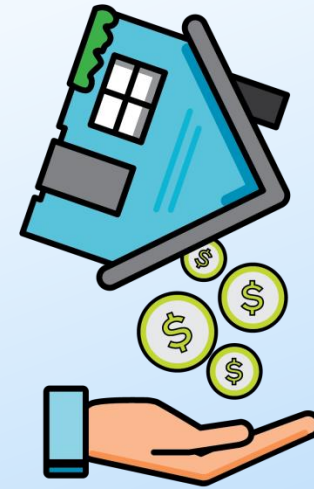
Report scams to ftc.gov/complaint or 1-877-FTC-HELP.

Visit staysafeonline.org for more tips.



Mortgage closing scams

- Scammers may pose as the real estate agent, settlement agent, legal representative or another trusted individual
- Scammers attempt to divert your closing costs and down payment into a fraudulent account by confirming or suggesting last-minute changes to your wiring instructions



Mortgage closing scams

Red Flags



- Someone calls or emails you and says you must make last-minute changes to your wiring instructions.
- Someone calls and asks you to verify your personal or financial information
- Someone asks you to send financial information by email
- You receive an email with links or attachments that your trusted representatives did not tell you to expect

Safeguards

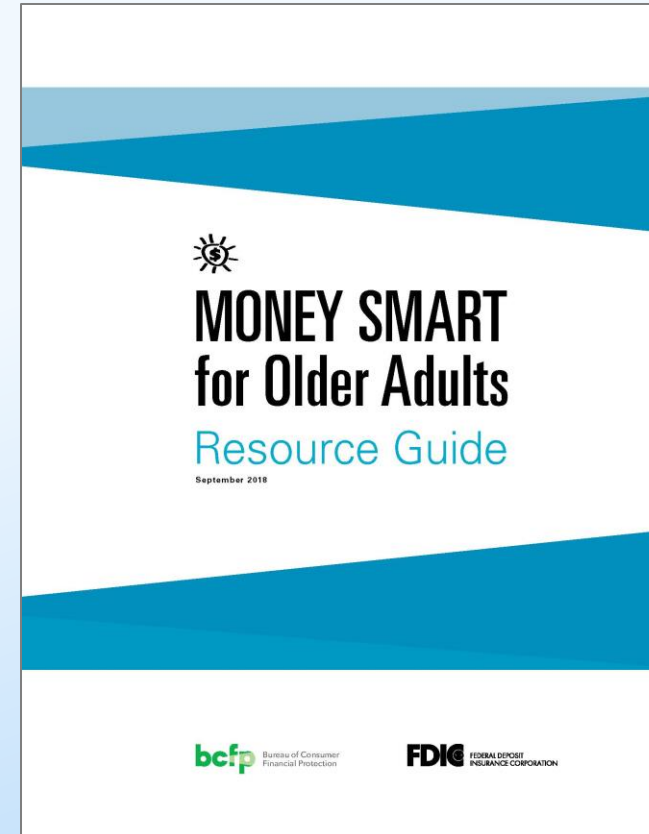


- Use the CFPB's [Mortgage Closing Checklist](#).
- Ahead of your mortgage closing, discuss in person, or by phone, the closing process and money transfer protocols with two trusted individuals (realtor, settlement agent, etc.)
- Before wiring money, always confirm instructions with your trusted representatives, either in person or by phone.

Scam prevention resources

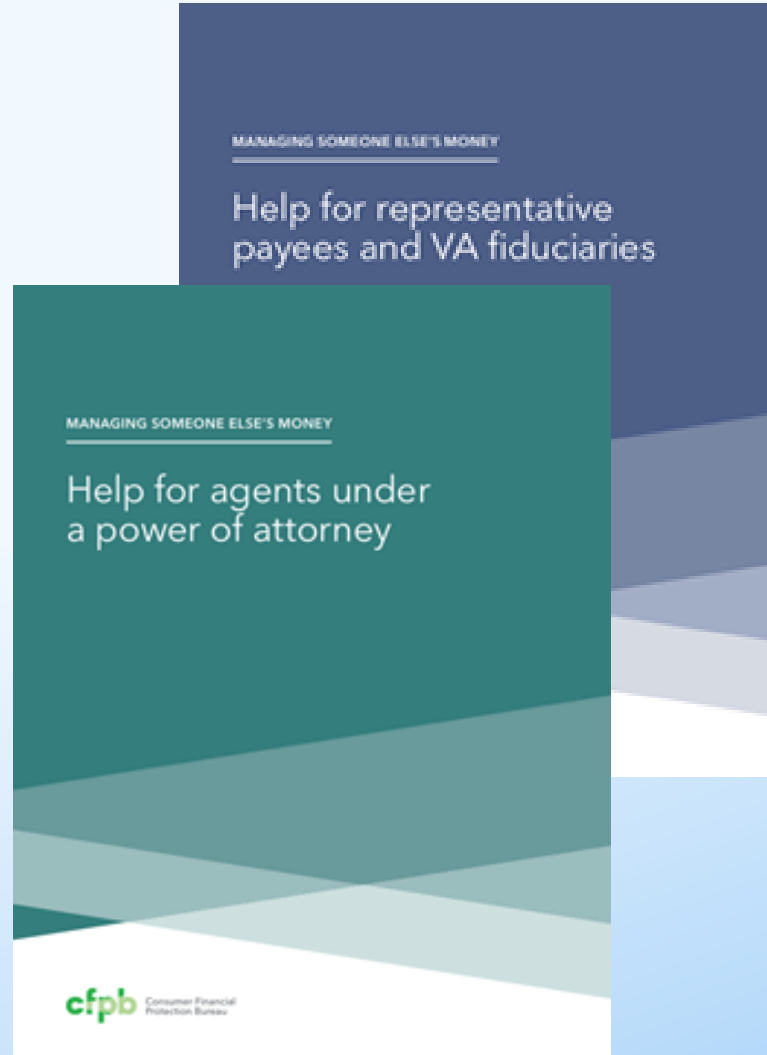
Money Smart for Older Adults

- An awareness program developed in collaboration with the FDIC
- Identify scams, fraud and other forms of exploitation
- Instructor guides available for download
- Resource guide available in bulk at no charge
- Available in English and Spanish




<https://www.consumerfinance.gov/practitioner-resources/resources-for-older-adults/protecting-against-fraud/>

Managing Someone Else's Money



- Help for financial caregivers handling the finances for a family member or another who is unable to do so
- Guides for four common types of financial caregivers:
 - Agents under a Power of Attorney
 - Guardians and conservators
 - Trustees
 - Social Security and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) representatives

Elder fraud prevention & response networks

 Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

Search | [Submit a Complaint](#)

[Consumer Tools](#) ▾ [Practitioner Resources](#) ▾ [Data & Research](#) ▾ [Policy & Compliance](#) ▾ [About Us](#) ▾

Resources to build an elder fraud prevention and response network

Mobilize key stakeholders in your community to prevent, detect, and respond to elder financial abuse.

Elder financial exploitation threatens the financial security of millions of older Americans annually. In response to this crisis, hundreds of communities across the United States have created collaborative networks to protect their older residents.

[Learn more about networks](#)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Connect with us to build a network

The Office of Financial Protection for Older Americans develops initiatives, tools, and resources to help protect older consumers from financial harm and help older consumers make sound financial decisions as they age. We also work with public and private stakeholders on preventing and responding to elder financial exploitation.

Fraud prevention placemats

- Free fraud prevention placemats, handouts, and activity sheets on how to avoid common scams
- Check out the companion resources with tips and information to reinforce the messages
- Available to download or order in bulk
- Available in English and Spanish



[Consumerfinance.gov/placemats](https://consumerfinance.gov/placemats)

Need more help or have a complaint?

For more help:

consumerfinance.gov/coronavirus

Submit a complaint online to CFPB:

consumerfinance.gov/complaint



Fraud Watch Network

- About the AARP Fraud Watch Network
- Gift cards as a form of payment in scams
- How we talk about fraud victims



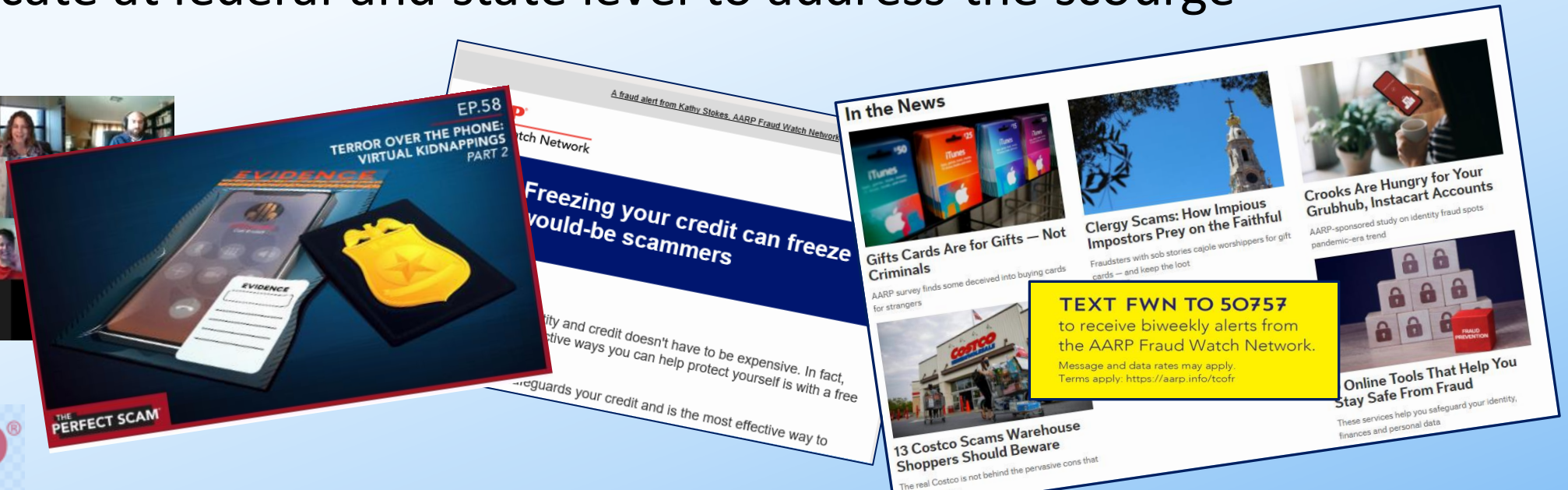
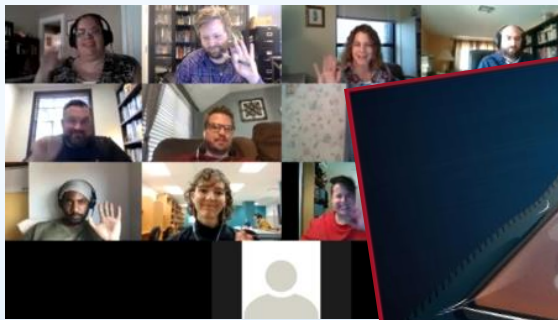
Fraud Watch Network

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FRAUD WATCH NETWORK

Fraud Watch Network

- Free to everyone
- Help consumers spot and avoid scams
- Support for those who experience a scam
- Advocate at federal and state level to address the scourge



Why Learning about Scams Matters

- If you *know* about a specific scam:
 - You are **80%** less likely to engage with the scammer
 - If you do engage, you are **40%** less likely to lose money or personal info

Source: The State of Financial Fraud Conference (October 2, 2019). “Exposed to scams: What separates victims from non-victims?”

GIFT CARDS AS PAYMENTS

Fraud Watch Network

- Typical scenario: **impersonation**
 - Government, Tech support, Publishers Clearinghouse, Business opportunity, Online love interest, Grandchild...
- Target is pushed into a **heightened emotional state**
 - Fear, Excitement, Love
- Scammer convinces the **quickest option is to purchase gift cards**
 - Read me the numbers off the back
 - Take a picture and share

WHY GIFT CARDS?

Fraud Watch Network

- Readily available
- Virtually untraceable
- Easily converted to cash or bitcoin
- Ability to move large amounts of money in small parcels



SPOT IT & STOP IT

Fraud Watch Network

Anytime you are directed to pay a debt or other obligation with a gift card, it is a scam. Full stop.

If it happens:

- Contact the issuing company right away
- Keep the card and receipt
- Tell the store where you bought it
- Report it to the FTC: reportfraud.ftc.gov



A WORD ABOUT WORDS

Fraud Watch Network

A victim of financial crime **is as much a victim** as a victim of violent crime, yet look at the language we use:

Financial crime victims:

- She was duped.
- He fell for it.
- He got taken.
- They were scammed.

We put the blame on
THE VICTIM

Violent crime victims:

- She was held at gunpoint.
- They were viciously assaulted.
- He was brutally murdered.
- She was forcibly raped.

We put the blame on
THE CRIMINAL

THE LANGUAGE OF VICTIMIZATION

Fraud Watch Network

- “I cannot fathom **the level of gullibility** it would take for someone to send money to someone they have never met. It’s just beyond my level of comprehension. That is the kindest way I can express what I’m thinking right now.”
- “Very sad, but really, these women **need their heads screwed on properly.**”
- “Good God... **Where has common sense gone?** I know people are lonely; hell, I am lonely, **but I am not stupid...**”

THE WEIGHT OF SHAMING

Fraud Watch Network

- “Actually, I was kind of embarrassed. My daughters sort of made me feel stupid.”
- “I’ve always thought I am smart enough not to be caught in a scam. I think I was acting out of my emotions.”
- “The mental anguish still lingers after it’s over. I hope in time I can overcome the embarrassment and humiliation of believing all the lies, of feeling so stupid for ignoring my intuition, and be able to gain some semblance of confidence to trust my decisions.”

LET'S FLIP THE NARRATIVE

Fraud Watch Network

- What if we said:
“Experiencing a scam is **not your fault**. It’s the fault of the criminal who perpetrated this crime. **I am sorry you’ve had to endure this**. Let’s talk through it to understand what happened so you will be able to spot the red flags of scams in the future.”

IT MATTERS BECAUSE...

Fraud Watch Network

- **Fraud victims** deserve *empathy and respect* rather than scorn and humiliation.
- **Families** won't see their victim parent as a "fool" and will thus *protect the relationship*.
- **Police** may be *more inclined to take a complaint*—even pursue the case—rather than claim it's a civil matter.
- **Prosecutors** might respect the impact of financial crime on older adults and might *take on more cases*.
- **Policymakers** might get that fraud victims aren't stupid or addled, and they'd *do more to address the scourge*—maybe even find a means of restitution.

THE ALL TOO HUMAN TOLL

Fraud Watch Network

- Billions of dollars lost, with little chance of restitution
- More than a million marriages damaged by the effects of dealing with fraud
- Thousands die by suicide each year
- Remembering Albert Poland

REMEMBERING ALBERT POLAND

Fraud Watch Network



Albert Poland

- He died by suicide at 81
- He suffered from cognitive decline
- In his note, he told his family not to spend much on his funeral and said he hoped that when more than \$2 million lottery he won arrived tomorrow, it would vindicate him.

FLIP THE NARRATIVE

Fraud Watch Network

- **OUT:** Judging victims, lack of empathy for the victim:
 - Scammed
 - Duped
 - Conned
 - Swindled
 - Fell for it
 - Got taken
- **IN:** Putting the focus on the crime, empathy for victim:
 - Perpetrated
 - Coerced
 - Deceived
 - Targeted
 - Experienced

PARTING THOUGHTS

Fraud Watch Network

Learn something new today?

SHARE IT WITH EVERYONE YOU KNOW!

FREE RESOURCES

Fraud Watch Network

- www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork
 - Sign up for biweekly email or text “Watchdog Alerts”
 - Visit the scam-tracking map
 - Tune into our hit podcast, *The Perfect Scam*™
 - Brush up with our Fraud Resource Center
- Fraud Watch Network Helpline **877-908-3360**
 - Report, ask if something is legit, get support if you’ve experienced a scam

PREVENTING SENIOR FRAUD: THE SERVICE COORDINATOR'S ROLE

**Tip for Building
Trust and
Intervening When
Someone is a
Victim**

- To provide the residents the ability to “age in place” by providing all necessary resources
- We may be referred to as the “resource center” or “in house social worker”
- We provide assistance; filling out forms, finding transportation, finding personal care services and homemaker services
- We provide information about; health related services, mental health issues and services, financial and food assistance and any other community resource
- We help find; durable medical equipment, new Drs, medical services, assist with Medicaid and Medicare
- We advocate with other agencies, local resources, building management and others
- In addition, we provide education, connect residents with technology, locate nutritional services and provide miscellaneous assistance

Service Coordinator Role...

Building Trust



An Ounce of Prevention...

Tips to Educate and Prevent

- Always keep resources on hand to act quickly if necessary
- Host education events multiple times throughout the year (when possible)
- Include resources in Welcome packets
- Send out periodic reminders of current scams in your area
- Work with your local partners including, but not limited to;
 - Police
 - DA Offices
 - AARP
 - Local Bank Managers
 - Local Investment Managers
 - Medicaid/Medicare Offices

Tips to Help You Avoid Being Scammed The FCC offers the following tips to help you protect yourself

- Do not respond to calls or texts from unknown numbers, or suspicious #s
- Never share personal or financial information via email, text, or phone.
- Be cautious if you're being pressured to share any information or make a payment
- 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 or email with a suspicious link-check with them before clicking
- Always check on a charity — for example, by calling or looking at its actual website — before donating.
- Check with your phone company about call blocking services and apps to filter out suspected spam robocalls.
- Help your residents with their privacy controls
- If you think you've been a victim of a coronavirus scam, contact law enforcement immediately.
- For more information about scam calls and texts, visit the [FCC Consumer Help Center](#) and the [FCC Scam Glossary](#). File coronavirus scam complaints online with the [Federal Trade Commission](#).

Technology Tips to Avoid Scams

What to do Next...

Intervening to Protect Your Residents!

- 1) When a resident comes to you believing they may be the victim of fraud-or maybe they're not **sure-LISTEN to them and get details**. This will help determine which agency to report the fraud to.
- 2) File a complaint with the FCC immediately
- 3) Sit with your resident as they make calls. This can be a very daunting task.
 - 1) Call their bank and/or credit card company
 - 2) You may need to call Social Security
 - 3) Call all 3 credit bureaus
 - 4) Gather all information and report to necessary agency
 - 1) ie, mail fraud goes to USPS

◦ **Going forward....**

- 1) FOLLOW UP!
- 2) Some tasks may require more than a phone call, assist with those tasks
- 3) Have them watch their mail for important documentation related to their fraud or identity theft case
- 4) This could have long term ramifications-**document everything well!**
- 5) It may be necessary to assist residents in changing online passwords, etc
- 6) People may feel embarrassed if this has happened to them. Encourage them to be open with you and others to prevent it from happening to someone they care about.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

MEDICARE FRAUD

YES, IT CAN HAPPEN TO YOU, TOO!

- Local business fair
- Trusted businessperson
- One resident signed up at the fair
- I did provide caution when she told me about her visitor
- I asked to speak to the visitor when she was done
- I brought this person into my office and I asked many questions
- I signed him up to do a presentation!
- He came and did a wonderful presentation
- He took swabs of their mouths-TO BILL MEDICARE
- Many residents signed up-he had a great spiel
- Found out a few days later, when a resident brought an article to my attention-THIS WAS THE LATEST SCAM
- TOOK IMMEDIATE ACTION-FOLLOWED ALL ACTIONS FROM MANAGEMENT TO PROTECT RESIDENTS FROM HARM
- Police came to take a report
- That trusted local businessman, had NO IDEA what he himself had been suckered into
- Actions that were taken did protect residents
- Only a few saw their Medicare be billed and NONE received bills for owing any money
- Now, all presenters or outside vendors are vetted and approved through management
- **There are many scams out there. Be aware. Stay informed. It can happen to anyone!**

For More Information Contact our Presenters



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All materials will be posted on the [HUD Strong Families](#) website when available.

THANK YOU!

