



Government Impersonator Scams

Here's how they work:



You get a call, email, or text message from someone who says they're from the Social Security Administration or Medicare. They say something alarming — like your Social Security number has been suspended. Or maybe you'll miss out on a government benefit. To fix it, they say you must pay, give them your personal information, or put your money on gift cards and read them the PIN numbers off the back of the cards.

The caller may know some of your Social Security number. And your caller ID might show a Washington, DC area code. But is it really the government calling?

No. The government doesn't call people out of the blue with threats or promises of money. Caller IDs can be faked, so if you're not sure, contact the agency at a phone number you know to be true (not the one they called you from).

Here's what to do:

- 1. Stop. Don't send money to anyone who calls, emails, or texts and says they're with the government.** Don't send them cash or pay them with gift cards, wire transfers, cryptocurrency or a payment app. The government won't demand payment that way — and once you pay, it's hard to get your money back. If you want to reach a government agency, find contact information at **USA.gov**.
- 2. Pass this information on to a friend.** You may not have gotten one of these calls, emails, or texts, but chances are, you know someone who has.



Want to know more?
Sign up for Consumer Alerts
at ftc.gov/ConsumerAlerts.

...Pass it ON

Please Report Scams

If you spot a scam, please report it to the Federal Trade Commission.

- Go online: **ReportFraud.ftc.gov**
- Call the FTC at 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357)
or TTY 1-866-653-4261

Your report can help protect other people. By reporting fraud, you can help alert law enforcers across the country who investigate and bring cases against scammers. Your report makes a difference.



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COMMISSION**

August 2023

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