

Fraud Alert: COVID-19

As COVID-19 (coronavirus) spreads globally, we have seen increasing reports of COVID-19 scams: Dishonest individuals attempting to deceive people to obtain money illegally from them. This type of fraud is increasing, and seniors are often the target of these deceptive phone calls. It is important for everyone, especially seniors, to be extremely careful and alert during this time. Read below for more information about common COVID-19 scams, and what to do if fraud happens to you.

EXAMPLES OF COVID-19 FRAUD TO WATCH OUT FOR

- Telephone calls and emails telling people they have tested positive for coronavirus, and asking for their health card and credit card numbers to pay for medication. This is a scam. Do not provide your information.
- People going door-to-door, selling fake decontamination services or fake coronavirus testing kits.
- Text messages from someone posing as the Red Cross, offering free face masks. The Canadian Red Cross says that if you receive this text, you should delete it immediately.
- Emails from an address posing as the World Health Organization or the Public Health Agency of Canada. Delete these emails and do not click any links.

HOW TO AVOID BEING A VICTIM OF FRAUD

- Stop and think before you share information over the phone or by email. Never share confidential information, especially if you did not initiate the call/email.
- Be suspicious of anything that seems too good to be true.
- Guard information such as passwords, your social insurance number, and banking PIN number.
- If you receive a suspicious email from someone familiar, call them to verify that they sent it.
- If you are unsure if something is a scam, check with a family member or friend.

WHAT TO DO IF FRAUD HAPPENS

- Call the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre at 1-888-495-8501.
- Report to police.
- Tell a friend or family member.

Information from Elder Abuse Ontario and CBC News