

Don't Fall for Stimulus Check Scams



Community Protection Division
Boulder County District Attorney's Office

What Scammers Are Doing:



Calling, texting, sending emails and social media messages asking you to:

- **“sign up”** to receive your check . . . by giving them your Social Security number or bank or PayPal account information.
- **“verify” your personal or financial information** in order to receive a check.



Setting up fake websites and social media posts promising ways to “speed up” delivery of your check. They’ll charge you a fee for pretending to get you to the front of the line.



Mailing a bogus check in an excess amount, which may lead to the recipient cashing it and sending the excess to the scammer.



Sending fake information in messages that appear to be from a US government agency, saying you must fill out a tax return, provide information about Social Security benefits, or complete the census to get a check.



Setting up fake charities asking you to donate your stimulus money.



What You Can Do:

Know how and when you'll get your money.

Most people who qualify will automatically receive checks:



- The IRS says it will calculate and automatically send checks to those eligible.
- The US Treasury Department and IRS state that Social Security recipients who are not typically required to file a tax return will receive their checks just as they would normally receive their benefits.
- Those who don't receive tax refunds or Social Security benefits via direct deposit will receive a paper check in the mail.
- People who don't file taxes or get Social Security benefits will need to provide their information to the IRS via a website portal, available mid-April.

There is no way to “speed up” the process.



- The IRS says it will begin to deliver checks via direct deposit in mid-April.

Be alert to the scams!



You don't have to pay a fee or put money on a gift card, and no one's asking you to verify any information.

- Ignore online offers, calls, emails, texts and social media messages telling you otherwise.



No government agency is sending messages asking you to fill something out to receive your check.

- Don't respond to fake messages claiming to be from the IRS, Treasury Dept. or Census Bureau telling you to fill out a form to get your check.



Examine paper checks that arrive in the mail.

- Checks written in odd amounts or for dollars and cents (not in an even dollar amount), or that require you to verify the check online or by calling a number are fakes – don't deposit them!



Don't click on links in unsolicited emails or from sources you don't know.

- Links can lead you to a fake website or can download malware or a virus onto your computer.



Donate wisely.

- Verify that a charity is legitimate at the CO Secretary of State's Office or coloradogives.org.
- Don't send cash in the mail, and don't donate by gift card or by wiring money.

Michael Dougherty, District Attorney