

Avoid Scams Related to COVID-19 Stimulus Checks

DE Attorney General Kathy Jennings warns Delawareans of possible scams related to the COVID-19 economic relief package. These payments include checks to most Americans totaling as much as \$1,200 for individuals or \$2,400 for joint filers, depending on income.

Some Americans may receive physical checks in their mailbox rather than direct deposit. **Beware scammers may use this opportunity to prey on consumers.**

- Fraudsters may leave messages by telephone or social media requesting personal or financial information in exchange for so-called immediate stimulus money through a “grant.”
- Scammers may ask for other information, including Social Security numbers and confirming of identity to receive their funding.
- Scammers may promise additional financing beyond the designated stimulus amount in exchange for a small payment or personal information.

The Delaware Department of Justice’s Consumer Protection Unit **tips to avoid these scams:**

- **Avoid giving anyone access to your bank account.** Only scammers will demand that you provide them with your personal information, such as Social Security numbers, bank account numbers, debit and credit cards, or PINs in order to receive stimulus funding
- **Avoid suggestions of paying any amount of money to receive stimulus.** There is no “grant” money. You will not be asked to pay any money, including a “processing fee,” to receive a stimulus check
- **Check your mailbox frequently to ward off theft. If your mailbox has a lock, use it** in case you receive stimulus funding by a physical check in your mailbox
- **Do Not enter your personal or financial information into phishing websites** that appear to be legitimate government websites
- **Do Not share personal information with any person or website** that asks for it in relation to the federal stimulus package.

If you believe you have been a victim of scam, you may file a complaint with the Consumer Protection Unit through a formal complaint or with the Federal Trade Commission here: <https://www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov/#crnt&panel1-1>

Consumer complaint forms can be found here: <https://attorneygeneral.delaware.gov/fraud/cpu/complaint/> and should be submitted along with any supporting documentation to consumer.protection@delaware.gov

The Consumer Protection Hotline toll free number: **888-434-9989.**