



Hunterdon County Sheriff's Office

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hunterdon County Sheriff Warns of COVID-19 Scams, Advises Residents To Be Vigilant And Aware

Sheriff Frederick W. Brown warns residents that there has been an increased number of scams due to the COVID-19 health crisis and advises residents to be extra cautious with emails, phone calls, specifically Telehealth calls, and if working from home, staying secure during video conferencing.

Sheriff Brown said, "We have been notified by state law enforcement agencies that scams which typically attack our senior population, are taking advantage of the current health crisis, preying on those with fear tactics, threats, false testing and even fake cures for the COVID-19 virus."

The Federal Trade Commission has reported that recent scams have included bogus text messages, calls and emails promising stimulus funds can be received faster through third party delivery services, which is not true, or fake websites selling masks or cleaning products to protect users from COVID-19.

Businesses are not immune from scams and staff should always be cautious about any emails which ask to 'click here' or that ask to update personal information. If suspicious emails are received at work, or at home, it is always advised not to open the email and to either mark it as spam or report it to the employers IT department.

Sheriff Brown said, "Criminals seize opportunities, such as severe weather events or health crises, to obtain information from fearful people who are under duress. Promises of additional relief payments or government services, once private information has been shared, is never received and on top of already feeling anxious due to the global health crisis, now these individuals feel victimized. Recovering stolen funds is usually not possible.

Staying informed is your best defense in this environment."

To report scam activity, contact Sheriff Brown at 908-788-1166, your local police department, or you can report it to the NJ Division of Consumer Affairs, <https://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/>.