

CORONAVIRUS SCAMS: DON'T LET FEAR LEAD TO FRAUD

Scammers sometimes send fake emails and text messages and even go to the extreme to set-up websites selling phony products. They do these things in an attempt to take your money and obtain your personal information to use to their benefit, but at your expense. Scammers often take advantage of vulnerable consumers in difficult situations, and they are now homing in on the recent fears about coronavirus (COVID-19) to continue their practices of causing havoc.

Scams associated with coronavirus (COVID-19) could include emails or social media posts that appear to be selling unproven preventative products or medical products that you pay for but are never delivered. Other scams may attempt to steal consumers' money and personal information by soliciting donations to help victims or pose as a legitimate organization by sending informational emails in order to trick you into opening malicious email attachments. As with any newsworthy topic, vigilance is imperative. It is important that you are aware of the possibility that fraud attempts may occur and also that you know what steps to take to help prevent being a victim of fraud.

Here are a few tips to help protect yourself from scams:

- **Pay close attention to emails claiming to be from the World Health Organization (WHO), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), or other "experts" claiming to have information about the virus. For current information about coronavirus (COVID-19), visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).**
- **Don't click on links from sources you don't know. This will help stop a potential computer virus from being downloaded to your computer or device. Take the opportunity now to ensure your anti-virus software is up to date.**
- **Avoid advertisements claiming to provide methods of prevention, treatment or cures for coronavirus (COVID-19). If there is a medical breakthrough, you will not hear about it first through an advertisement.**
- **Do your research or fact checking before you donate to a charity. Just because the requestor appears to be reputable with a logo or seal, or the request includes words like "government" or "CDC" doesn't always mean it is legitimate. In addition, if someone asks for donations in the form of cash, gift card or by wiring money, don't fall for it. If there is an organization that you would like to make a donation to, contact them directly and inquire about options they have for supporting specific causes.**

Scams succeed because they look real and catch you off guard when you aren't expecting it. By incorporating these tips into your daily routine, you can reduce the likelihood of becoming a fraud victim.



BANKAVB.COM | 918.251.9611