

Second Stimulus Payment Scams

Bucks County Consumer Protection would like to warn residents now that legislation to provide taxpayers with a second stimulus payment has passed, Americans are anxiously awaiting the much-needed financial assistance. At the same time, scammers will be trying their best to get their hands on your money. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is warning taxpayers about a new scam through text message attempting to trick people into disclosing bank account information to receive an Economic Impact Payment, or stimulus check.

The scam involves thieves texting messages to taxpayers that look something like this: You have received a direct deposit of \$600 from COVID-19 TREAS FUND. Further action is required to accept this payment into your account. Continue here to accept this payment. The text includes a link to a fake website, which is a phishing scam. The phishing website, which appears to come from a state agency or relief organization, directs victims to a fraudulent website that impersonates the legitimate IRS.gov website. Those who visit the fraudulent website are encouraged to enter their personal and financial account information. If you do, you will have your information collected by these scammers and potentially fall victim to Identity Theft or financial loss at an already difficult time. The IRS will never send a text message to taxpayers asking for bank account information. The IRS also will not text you with respect to your Economic Impact Payment (EIP) or stimulus check deposit. If you receive this text message scam, the IRS asks that you take a screen shot of the text message and send it via email to phishing@irs.gov with the following information: The Date/Time/Time zone where you received the text message, the number that appeared on your Caller ID, and the phone number that received the text message.

If you believe you are eligible for a stimulus check only go to the legitimate IRS website for more information. Visit www.irs.gov and click "Get My Economic Impact Payment" for the latest information regarding the second stimulus as it becomes available. Bucks County Consumer Protection urges residents to remain alert to these types of scams to avoid Identity Theft and financial loss. When in doubt, assume it's a scam. Don't engage with scammers or thieves, even if you want to tell them that you know it's a scam, or you think that you can beat them. Just hang up or delete the text.

As a reminder, the IRS will NEVER:

- Call to demand immediate payment by phone for taxes owed without first mailing you a bill.
- Send unsolicited texts or emails about your tax account or stimulus check.
- Threaten to send local police or other law-enforcement groups to have you arrested for not paying a tax bill.
- Demand that you pay taxes without allowing you to question or appeal the amount they say you owe.
- Require you to use a specific payment method for your taxes, such as a debit card, gift card, or wire transfer.
- Ask for bank account, credit or debit card numbers over the phone.

Monthly Fraud Alerts brought to you by: Bucks County Crimes Against Older Adults Task Force	
Bucks County District Attorney's Office: 215-348-6344	A Woman's Place (AWP): 1-800-220-8116
Bucks County Area Agency on Aging: 267-880-5700	Bucks County Office of Consumer Protection: 215-348-6060
Bucks County Coroner's Office: 215-348-3852	Bucks County Register of Wills: 215-348-6265
Network of Victim Assistance (NOVA): 1-800-675-6900	US Dept. of Health and Human Services/OIG: 1-800-447-8477

