

Email from Sen. Sherrod Browns office: Re: COVID 19 Scams 4/1/2020

Reports across the country have shown that **coronavirus scams are on the rise**, and I want you to have the best information. These scammers prey especially on older Ohioans but have even targeted small business owners.

Scammers have appeared selling fake vaccinations and testing kits; offering delivery of sanitation supplies; impersonating the Social Security Administration (SSA) or the Internal Revenue Service (IRS); and many more. They occur online, on the phone, and in person.

Scammers are also targeting stimulus payments from the CARES Act. Remember: **the government will not call you asking for PayPal information, or your Social Security, credit card, or bank account numbers.**

### **Tips for Avoiding Scams**

Here are some important tips from the FTC:

- Hang up on robocalls and don't press any buttons. Scammers are pitching everything from fake coronavirus treatments to work-at-home schemes. The recording might tell you to press a button to be removed from their call list, but it might lead to more robocalls.
- Ignore online offers for vaccinations and home test kits. Scammers are trying to get you to buy products that aren't proved to treat or prevent COVID-19.
- Fact-check your information. Scammers, but also well-meaning people, share information that isn't verified. Before you pass on any messages, contact trusted sources.
- Do your homework when it comes to donations, especially with charities or crowdfunding sites. Investigate charities before you donate and don't let anyone rush you into giving money.

At this time of heightened public fears, it's important to remain vigilant and follow the [Federal Trade Commission's \(FTC\) tips for avoiding coronavirus scams](#). To report a scam to the FTC, go to [ftc.gov/complaint](https://www.ftc.gov/complaint).