

Scam of the Month

Holiday Scams

The holiday season is upon us! With it comes time with loved ones and plenty of shopping! While doing your holiday traditions this year, be on the lookout for these big scams:

- **“Free” gift cards and HUGE sales**
 - Be wary of anything listed as “free” or any offers that sound “too good to be true”. Only used reputable sellers
- **Fake websites and messages**
 - Double check all websites you shop on and ensure they are legitimate
 - Don’t trust messages and emails claiming to have updates about a package you didn’t purchase. Delete the messages. Don’t click on any links.
- **Scam calls claiming to be loved ones**
 - Artificial intelligence is being used by scammers to copy the voices of our loved ones to get access to our money or personal information. **HANG UP!** Confirm with your loved ones before sharing.

Stay safe this holiday season! Report scams to the Better Business Bureau at www.bbb.org

If you or a loved one has been a victim of Medicare fraud, call the Texas Senior Medicare Patrol.

Report Medicare Fraud to our hotline

888-341-6187

TXSMP Scam of the Month

Holiday Scams

Happy holidays! It is officially that time of year again. Time for laughter, cheer... and scams?! The holidays are prime time for scammers to try to steal our information and get our money. Be on the lookout for these popular scams so that we can spend more time with our loved ones, and not with scammers.

Fake Social Media Ads – Social media is a great place for gift inspiration, and we might find a great sale on Facebook, but watch out! Those “too good to be true” offers usually are. Make sure to always research before you buy. Check reviews, compare prices, and stick to trusted retailers!

Look-alike Websites – If you plan on doing your holiday shopping online, watch out for look-alike websites and use only legitimate shopping sites. Look for URLs that use the names of well-known brands with misspellings such as “www.wallmart.com” or “www.amason.com”

Social Media Gift Exchange - Purchasing one gift and receiving 36 sounds like a great deal, but this seasonal scam is a pyramid scheme, which is illegal. Keep it safe and only buy gifts for people you know (not ones you have only met online.)

Temporary Holiday Jobs - Want to make a little extra cash this season? Perfect timing, companies need help this season, but watch out for email or text message solicitations that require you to share personal information online or pay for a job lead or hire you without an interview. Apply in person or go to retailers’ main websites to find out who is hiring.

Fake Shipping Notifications – Watch out for messages claiming to be USPS, Amazon, FedEx, or other shipping companies about packages that are undelivered or need additional verification. This email can have attachments or links to sites that will download viruses on your device to steal your identity and your passwords. Do not be fooled by this holiday phishing scam.

Free Gift Cards – Scammers are trying to steal your identity and passwords by offering you FREE gift cards. In this case, you will receive a pop-up ad, social media message or email offering a “free” gift card. But wait, you need to provide personal information to receive it!

Grandparent Scam - This scam uses Artificial Intelligence to clone people’s voices. Seniors should be cautious if they get a call from someone claiming to be a loved one, saying they have been in an accident, arrested, or hospitalized while traveling in another country and needs money NOW. Always contact your loved ones directly to confirm before sending money.

If you believe that you are a victim of Medicare fraud, contact:

Texas Senior Medicare Patrol – 888-341-6187