

## **Social Security Column**

### **SLAM THE SCAM: HOW TO SPOT GOVERNMENT IMPOSTERS**

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Do you know how to spot a government imposter scam? We continue to raise public awareness about Social Security-related and other government imposter scams during the fifth annual “Slam the Scam” Day on March 7, 2024. Knowing how to identify potential scammers will help safeguard your personal information.

There are common elements to many scams. Scammers often take advantage of fears and threaten you with arrest or legal action. Scammers also pretend to be Social Security or other government employees and claim there’s a problem with your Social Security number (SSN) or your benefits. They may even claim your SSN is linked to a crime.

When you suspect you’ve been contacted by a scammer:

- Hang up right away or ignore the message.

- Never provide personal information, money, or gift cards.
- Report the scam immediately to our Office of the Inspector General (OIG) at [oig.ssa.gov/scam-awareness/report-the-scam](http://oig.ssa.gov/scam-awareness/report-the-scam).

If you owe money to Social Security, we'll mail you a letter with payment options and appeal information. We only accept payments electronically through Pay.gov, Online Bill Pay, or by check or money order.

We will never:

- Threaten you with arrest or legal action because you don't agree to pay us money immediately.
- Promise a benefit increase in exchange for money.
- Ask you to send us gift cards, prepaid debit cards, wire transfers, internet currency, cryptocurrency, or cash through the U.S. mail.

Scammers continue to evolve and find new ways to steal your money and personal information. Please stay vigilant and help raise awareness about Social Security-related and other government imposter scams. For more information, please visit [www.ssa.gov/scam](http://www.ssa.gov/scam).

Tell your friends and family about government imposter scams. Let them know they don't have to be embarrassed to report if they shared personal financial information or suffered a financial loss. The important thing is to report the scam right away.

Together, we can "Slam the Scam!"

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