

# NEWS BRIEF

Provided by: StoneTapert Insurance Services

## Beware of COVID-19 Vaccine Scams

Since COVID-19 vaccine demand is increasing and distribution varies by state, scammers are trying to take advantage of uncertainty and confusion to steal money and personal information from vaccine seekers. Scammers are using phone calls, text messages, social media platforms and door-to-door visits to commit these COVID-19-related scams.

### Ways to Avoid COVID-19 Vaccine Scams

Keep in mind that there is no special list to receive early access to a COVID-19 vaccine, nor can you pay for immediate access to a vaccine.

Americans are encouraged to be patient as vaccine distribution and developments evolve. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has provided the following tips to help you avoid a [vaccine-related scam](#):

- **Contact a trusted source for information.** Check with state or local health departments to learn when and how to get the COVID-19 vaccine.
- **Don't pay to sign up for the vaccine.** Anyone who asks for a payment to put you on a list or make an appointment is a scammer.
- **Ignore advertisements for the COVID-19 vaccine,** especially those posted on social media. No legitimate vaccine is for sale. The vaccine is only available at federal- and state-approved locations.
- **Watch for unusual texts.** Never trust the legitimacy of a text message. However, if your health care provider or pharmacist has previously used text messages to contact you, you might get a text from them when you're eligible to be vaccinated.

- **Don't open emails, attachments or links** from people you don't know. If you open or click those suspicious items, you could be downloading dangerous malware onto your computer or phone.
- **Don't share your personal or financial information** with people you don't know. Nobody from a vaccine distribution site or health care provider's office will call, text or email you asking for your Social Security number, credit card information or bank account number to sign you up to receive the vaccine.

### What's Next?

As you wait for your turn to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, it's important to be patient and stay alert. Continue to monitor vaccine eligibility and availability from local health care providers.

If you're aware of a COVID-19 vaccine scam or think you've been a victim of a vaccine scam, immediately let the FTC know at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov/whistleblower).

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