

## SCAM AWARENESS

The Inspector General of Social Security, Gail S. Ennis, continues to warn Americans about widespread phone scams where callers may impersonate Social Security or claim a Social Security-related problem, to gain your trust and steal your money.



### **The Social Security Administration will NEVER:**

- Call to threaten you with arrest or legal action if you do not immediately pay a debt, fine, or fee.
- Tell you that your Social Security number has been suspended, or offer to increase your benefits or resolve identity theft problems in exchange for payment.
- Require payment via retail gift cards, prepaid debit cards, wire transfers, or internet currency like Bitcoin, or by mailing cash.
- Demand secrecy in handling a Social Security-related problem, or tell you to make up a story to tell your friends, family, or store/bank employees.
- Text you unsolicited to tell you about a problem with your Social Security number or benefits.
- Email you attached documents containing your personally identifiable information.

Be very cautious if you receive an unsolicited call from the government and you don't recognize the problem or issue they're calling about. Do not provide personally identifiable information over the phone.

Discuss major financial decisions with trusted friends or family. If you owe money to Social Security, the agency will mail you a letter with payment options and appeal rights.

If you receive a suspicious call:

- HANG UP!
- DO NOT GIVE THEM MONEY OR PERSONAL INFORMATION!
- REPORT SOCIAL SECURITY SCAMS AT OIG.SSA.GOV
- REPORT OTHER IMPOSTER SCAMS AT FTC.GOV/COMPLAINT.

The Office of the Inspector General <https://oig.ssa.gov/scam>