

FRAUD ALERT: USDA Warns of Scams Targeting SNAP Recipients

(Washington, D.C., March 24, 2020) – Be on the lookout for potential scammers using the COVID-19 situation to steal personal information, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) warned Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants today. USDA is issuing this warning after receiving reports of several possible SNAP fraud attempts.

“While many organizations are seeking to help communities respond to COVID-19, SNAP participants should be suspicious of any unknown individual or organization that requests their confidential information,” said Brandon Lipps, Deputy Under Secretary for USDA’s Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services, which administers the SNAP program at the federal level. “This is a difficult time for us all, and we certainly don’t want to see bad actors taking advantage of those in need.”

Examples of confidential information include social security number, bank information, or a participant’s SNAP EBT card or PIN number. In one potential scam, a website asked SNAP recipients to enter their personal and bank account information to qualify for COVID-related monetary assistance.

If SNAP participants are unsure if a request for information is legitimate, USDA advises they contact their local SNAP office. If they do not know their local SNAP office, participants should contact their state agency. State contact information is available at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/state-directory>.

To stay on top of potential scams, please visit USDA’s SNAP scam alert webpage at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/scam-alerts>.

If you believe you are the victim of identity theft, contact your local police department regarding procedures for filing a report. You may also file a consumer complaint online with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at <https://www.ftc.gov>. FTC is the federal agency responsible for protecting consumers from identity theft scams.

USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) administers 15 [nutrition assistance programs](#) that leverage American’s agricultural abundance to ensure children and low-income individuals and families have nutritious food to eat. FNS also co-develops the [Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#), which provide science-based nutrition recommendations and serve as the cornerstone of federal nutrition policy.

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