



Department of Justice

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District of Oregon

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020

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U.S. ATTORNEY AND OREGON ATTORNEY GENERAL PARTNER TO PROTECT OREGONIANS FROM COVID-19 FRAUD

PORTLAND, Ore.—U.S. Attorney Billy J. Williams and Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum today announced the formation of a state-federal partnership to protect Oregonians from COVID-19 fraud. Together, the two offices will share information and resources to prevent Oregonians from falling victim to scams and other schemes attempting to exploit the COVID-19 pandemic and public health emergency.

Both offices have civil and criminal enforcement authority and will continue to refer serious allegations regarding COVID-19-related scams, Medicaid fraud, and other consumer fraud to each other for state or federal enforcement, as appropriate. They will also work with other federal, state, local, and tribal partners throughout Oregon to help educate communities about emerging scams and fraud schemes, and share resources related to consumer complaints.

“While Americans work to protect themselves and their loved ones from the ongoing threat of COVID-19, some individuals are actively trying to profit off of the public health emergency. Scammers have devised numerous methods to defraud people, preying on individuals’ fear, emotion, and desire to protect themselves, their families, and their communities,” said U.S. Attorney Williams. “I am pleased to join Attorney General Rosenblum and the Oregon Department of Justice to announce our new consumer protection partnership. Oregonians should have confidence that our offices are doing everything in our power to prevent them from becoming the victim of COVID-19 fraud and abuse.”

“Fraudsters are operating in full force right now—especially preying on Oregonians who may have uncashed stimulus checks, pending unemployment claims, or who may be particularly vulnerable to health care-related scams, like unauthorized tests to detect the coronavirus. By working together with U.S. Attorney Williams, we can use the power of our positions and the resources of our two offices to make sure no Oregonian is taken advantage of. I look forward to working together and with our other wonderful state and local partners, like the new non-profit, Oregon Consumer Justice, who are helping us spread the word about—and put a stop to—COVID-related scams and frauds,” said Attorney General Rosenblum.

In particular, U.S. Attorney Williams and Attorney General Rosenblum encourage Oregonians to be on the lookout for:

- **Testing scams**—someone trying to sell you an unauthorized COVID-19 cure, vaccine, or testing kit or going door-to-door performing fake tests for money;
- **Charity scams**—scammers soliciting donations for individuals or areas affected by COVID-19 or charities purportedly working on behalf of COVID-19 victims;
- **Price gouging scams**—businesses marking up the price of essential consumer goods and selling them at higher prices than what the goods would normally be sold for;
- **Identity scams**—imposters pretending to be a government official asking you for personal identifying information, access to your bank or unemployment insurance account, or offering to help you access government benefits faster, including economic impact payments.

U.S. Attorney Williams and Attorney General Rosenblum will host a tele-town hall on May 12, 2020, focusing on scam and fraud identification and prevention. The event will be co-hosted by Oregon Consumer Justice and will be open to the public. Event details:

- Date: Tuesday, May 12, 2020
- Time: 10:00-11:00 PDT
- To participate, please dial: (855)-756-7520, Extension 60478#
- If you cannot attend this event live, a recording will be made available online at www.oregonconsumer.gov/COVID-19.

If you or someone you know have been the victim of one of the scams described above or any other COVID-19-related fraud, please contact the Oregon Department of Justice at 1-877-877-9392, or submit a tip online at www.oregonconsumer.gov. If you or someone you know are in immediate danger, please call 911.

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