



Office of the Inspector General

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 19, 2019

<https://oig.ssa.gov>

Social Security OIG Launches Online Scam Reporting Form

The Inspector General for the Social Security Administration, Gail S. Ennis, and Commissioner of Social Security Andrew Saul announce the launch of a dedicated online form at <https://oig.ssa.gov> to receive reports from the public of Social Security-related scams. These scams—in which fraudulent callers mislead victims into making cash or gift card payments to avoid arrest for purported Social Security number problems—skyrocketed over the past year to become the #1 type of fraud reported to the Federal Trade Commission and the Social Security Administration.

To combat these scams, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) will use the new online form to capture data that will be analyzed for trends and commonalities. The OIG will use the data to identify investigative leads, which could help identify criminal entities or individuals participating in or facilitating the scams. Ultimately, these efforts are expected to disrupt the scammers, helping reduce this type of fraud as well as the number of victims.

“We are taking action to raise awareness and prevent scammers from harming Americans,” said Commissioner Saul. “I am deeply troubled that our country has not been able to stop these crooks from deceiving some of the most vulnerable members of our society.”

Inspector General Ennis and Commissioner Saul encourage the public to use the new online form to report Social Security phone scams including robocalls and live callers, as well as email, text, and in-person scams. The form allows people to create a unique Personal Identification Number (PIN), so if the OIG contacts a person about their report, they will know the call is legitimate.

“Awareness is our best hope to thwart the scammers,” said Inspector General Ennis. “Tell your friends and family about them and report them to us when you receive them, but most importantly, just hang up and ignore the calls.”

Social Security employees do occasionally contact people—generally those who have ongoing business with the agency—by telephone for business purposes. However, Social Security employees will never threaten a person with arrest or other legal action if they do not immediately pay a fine or debt. In those cases, the call is fraudulent and people should just hang up.

Social Security will not:

- Tell you that your Social Security number has been suspended.
- Contact you to demand an immediate payment.
- Require a specific means of debt repayment, like a prepaid debit card, a retail gift card, or cash.

Please direct press inquiries to (410) 965-2671, and visit <https://oig.ssa.gov> for more information.



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- Demand that you pay a Social Security debt without the ability to appeal the amount you owe.
- Promise a Social Security benefit approval, or increase, in exchange for information or money.

If there is a problem with a person's Social Security number or record, in most cases Social Security will mail a letter. If a person needs to submit payments to Social Security, the agency will send a letter with instructions and payment options. People should never provide information or payment over the phone or online unless they are certain of who is receiving it.

The Social Security OIG will also continue to take reports of fraud, waste, and abuse in Social Security's programs and operations. A separate online form for those reports remains available [on the OIG website](#).

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