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## Neighborhood Watch Alert

April 6th, 2020

### AARP Scam Report

Hello Neighbors,

I don't usually pass on articles, but I think this report from AARP is important. There is so much being published about the horrible pandemic, COVID-19, so everyone has been updated on the virus itself, but we do need to remember there are many despicable individuals out there that are trying to take financial advantage of others.

### IRS Warns Taxpayers About Stimulus-Check Scams Ignore come-ons promising help to get you your payments, tax refunds

by Dena Bunis, [AARP](#), April 2, 2020 | Comments: 5



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If you get a call, email, text or social media message saying the Internal Revenue Service needs money or some personal information before sending your income-tax refund or [stimulus payment](#), don't respond. It's a scam, federal officials said Thursday, in a new alert to taxpayers.

"We urge people to take extra care during this period," IRS Commissioner Chuck Rettig warned. "The IRS isn't going to call you asking to verify or provide your financial information you can get an economic-impact payment or your refund faster. That also applies to [surprise emails that appear to be coming from the IRS](#). Remember, don't open them or click attachments or links."

**For the latest coronavirus news and advice** [go to AARP.org/coronavirus](https://www.aarp.org/coronavirus).

The IRS and its criminal investigation division have seen a wave of new schemes that criminals are devising to cheat Americans by using the stimulus checks as a way to gain access to their personal identifying information. "History has shown that criminals take every opportunity to perpetrate a fraud on unsuspecting victims, especially when a group of people is vulnerable or in a state of need," said Don Fort, chief of the criminal investigation division. "While you are waiting to hear about your economic-impact payment, criminals are

hard to trick you into getting their hands on it. The IRS criminal investigation division is working hard to find these scammers and shut them down, but in the meantime, we ask to remain vigilant."

If you already have a 2018 or 2019 federal tax return on file and are eligible for a stimulus payment under the [CARES Act](#), the IRS will deposit your payment directly into the bank account you listed on your return. Social Security recipients and railroad retirees will automatically receive a \$1,200 stimulus payment the same way they receive monthly benefits even if they didn't file a return for 2018 or 2019. The IRS says it will get the information for those recipients from annual 1099 benefit statements. If you need to provide bank information, there will be a secure portal set up on IRS.gov by the middle of April that will allow you to do so. If you don't provide your bank account information, a check will be mailed to your address on file, according to the agency. Officials warn Americans not to give banking information to strangers who offer to put that information into the IRS system.

### Here are clues that you're being swindled

- The caller or emailer uses the words "stimulus check" or "stimulus payment." The term that government officials are using is "economic-impact payment."
- You're asked to sign your check over to the caller.
- You receive an email, text or social media message saying that you need to verify your personal and/or banking information to speed up your stimulus payment.
- The individual offers to get you your payment faster.
- You receive a [fake check](#), and then the sender tells you to call a number to verify your personal information in order to cash it.

### Report potential scams

If you receive unsolicited information-gathering emails, texts or social media messages that appear to be from the IRS or an organization closely linked to the agency, such as the Electronic Federal Tax Payment System, forward them to [phishing@irs.gov](mailto:phishing@irs.gov).

Taxpayers are also cautioned not to interact with potential scammers online or over the phone. Learn more about reporting suspected scams by going to the [Report Phishing and Online Scams](#) page at IRS.gov.

Official IRS information about the COVID-19 pandemic and economic-impact payments can be found on the [Coronavirus Tax Relief](#) page at IRS.gov.

### More on Scams and Fraud

- [Coronavirus scams spread as fraudsters follow the headlines](#)
- [Officials shut down website peddling COVID-19 vaccine](#)
- [Beware scam robocalls, texts tied to COVID-19 outbreak](#)

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Also on AARP

- [Stimulus Checks: Who Is Eligible and How Much Will They Be?](#)
- [Social Security Recipients to Get Stimulus Payments Without Filing Tax Returns](#)
- [How to Sew a Quick and Easy Cloth Face Mask](#)
- [Coronavirus' Devastating Economic Impact on Workers Age 50-Plus](#)

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#### **Marilyn Frost**

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Although we endeavor to keep our communications to a minimum, as a resident of Summerplace and a member of the Summerplace Homeowner's Association, you will receive occasional emails from the Office containing important information; together with Neighborhood Watch alerts issued by the Neighborhood Watch Committee.

**Our mailing address is:**

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