

## Scammers cash in on COVID-19 vaccination confusion

With every passing day, the news on COVID-19 vaccine distribution seems to change. One reason is that distribution varies by state and territory. And scammers, always at the ready, are taking advantage of the confusion. Besides a big dose of patience, here are some tips to help you avoid a vaccine-related scam, no matter where you live:

- ◆ Contact a trusted source for information. Check with [state](#) or [local](#) health departments to learn when and how to get the COVID-19 vaccine. You can also talk with your health care provider or pharmacist.
- ◆ Don't pay to sign up for the vaccine. Anyone who asks for a payment to put you on a list, make an appointment for you, or reserve a spot in line is a scammer.
- ◆ Ignore sales ads for the COVID-19 vaccine. You can't buy it – anywhere. The vaccine is only available at federal- and state-approved locations.
- ◆ Watch for unexpected or unusual texts. If your health care provider or pharmacist has used text messages to contact you in the past, you might get a text from them about the vaccine. If you get a text, call your health care provider or pharmacist directly to make sure they sent the text. But scammers are texting, too. So don't click on links in text messages – especially messages you didn't expect.
- ◆ Don't open emails, attachments, or links from people you don't know, or that come unexpectedly. You could download dangerous [malware](#) onto your computer or phone.
- ◆ Don't share your personal, financial, or health information with people you don't know. No one from a vaccine distribution site, health care provider's office, pharmacy, or health care payer, like a private insurance company or Medicare, will call, text, or email you asking for your Social Security, credit card, or bank account number to sign you up to get the vaccine.

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If you know about a COVID-19 vaccine scam, let the FTC know at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov/whistleblower). Or, file a complaint with your state or territory attorney general through [consumerresources.org](https://www.consumerresources.org), the consumer website of the National Association of Attorneys General.

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