



**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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COVID-19 VACCINATION SCAMS AWARENESS

PURCELLVILLE, Va., December 30, 2020 – While many people are eager to receive a COVID-19 vaccination, the Purcellville Police Department would like to warn the public about several emerging fraud schemes related to these vaccines. The Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) has recently received an increase in complaints of scammers using the public's interest in COVID-19 vaccines to obtain personally identifiable information and money through various schemes. Please review the tips below from the FBI to help ensure you don't fall victim to a vaccination scam.

The public should be aware of the following potential indicators of fraudulent activity:

- Advertisements or offers for early access to a vaccine upon payment of a deposit or fee.
- Requests asking you to pay out of pocket to obtain the vaccine or to put your name on a COVID-19 vaccine waiting list.
- Offers to undergo additional medical testing or procedures when obtaining a vaccine.
- Marketers offering to sell and/or ship doses of a vaccine, domestically or internationally, in exchange for payment of a deposit or fee.
- Unsolicited emails, telephone calls, or personal contact from someone claiming to be from a medical office, insurance company, or COVID-19 vaccine center requesting personal and/or medical information to determine recipients' eligibility to participate in clinical vaccine trials or obtain the vaccine.
- Claims of FDA approval for a vaccine that cannot be verified.
- Advertisements for vaccines through social media platforms, email, telephone calls, online, or from unsolicited/unknown sources.
- Individuals contacting you in person, by phone, or by email to tell you the government or government officials require you to receive a COVID-19 vaccine.

Tips to avoid COVID-19 vaccine-related fraud:

- Consult your state's health department website for up-to-date information about authorized vaccine distribution channels and only obtaining a vaccine through such channels.

- Check the FDA’s website (fda.gov) for current information about vaccine emergency use authorizations.
- Consult your primary care physician before undergoing any vaccination.
- Don’t share your personal or health information with anyone other than known and trusted medical professionals.
- Check your medical bills and insurance explanation of benefits (EOBs) for any suspicious claims and promptly reporting any errors to your health insurance provider.
- Follow guidance and recommendations from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other trusted medical professionals.

If you believe you have been the victim of a COVID-19 fraud, immediately report it to the FBI (ic3.gov, tips.fbi.gov, or 1-800-CALL-FBI) or HHS OIG (tips.hhs.gov or 1-800-HHS-TIPS).

Protect Yourself
AVOID COVID-19 Vaccine Scams

As COVID-19 vaccine distribution begins, here are signs of potential scams:

- You are asked to pay out of pocket to get the vaccine.
- You are asked to pay to put your name on a vaccine waiting list or to get early access.
- Advertisements for vaccines through social media platforms, email, telephone calls, online, or from unsolicited/unknown sources.
- Marketers offering to sell or ship doses of the vaccine for payment.

✓ **Protect Yourself. Do not give out your personal information to unknown sources.**

! If you believe you have been the victim of COVID-19 fraud, immediately report it to:

- HHS-OIG Hotline: 1-800-HHS-TIPS | tips.hhs.gov
- FBI Hotline: 1-800-CALL-FBI | ic3.gov
- CMS/Medicare Hotline: 1-800-MEDICARE

For accurate, up-to-date information about COVID-19, visit:
oig.hhs.gov/coronavirus
fbi.gov/coronavirus
justice.gov/coronavirus

HHS Office of Inspector General | Federal Bureau of Investigation | Department of Justice | CMS

The Town of Purcellville, Virginia

“Purcellville-your small Town, where history and progress intersect and people prosper,” is an award-winning town of over 10,000 residents located in Loudoun County, approximately 50 miles west of Washington, DC. Having received the prestigious Siemens Sustainability Award for Small Communities, Purcellville continues to be honored for its green initiatives with most recently being the Tree City USA recipient for the 12th year. The Town was reaffirmed as a AAA rated community by S&P Global Ratings, the highest credit rating possible, and is recognized as one of the safest towns in Virginia. Once a stop along the W&OD rail line, which has been converted to a multi-use trail from Alexandria, VA to

Purcellville, the Town has maintained its historic old-town feel through the restoration and maintenance of its many downtown structures, reflecting the Victorian architecture popular during the early 1900s. Today, Purcellville is the economic hub of western Loudoun County and a popular weekend destination for antiquing, equestrian activities, farmer's markets, wineries, breweries, distilleries and restaurants. More info at www.purcellvilleva.gov.

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