

Trading Standards Alert

COVID-19 Fraud

Fraudsters are taking advantage of the international issue of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and are increasingly targeting the public and organisations with emails, texts, 'phone calls and WhatsApp messages offering advice and treatment for the coronavirus, as well as setting up fake websites selling products and offering 'cures'. Scammers have also been setting up bogus websites asking for donations for victims or promoting awareness and prevention tips. Cold callers have been contacting organisations suggesting they must have certain measures in place by a certain deadline. A common tactic is for scammers to purport to be from research groups attached to the World Health Organisation (WHO) or the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

- Be sceptical if you receive an email, text or WhatsApp message about the Coronavirus, and NEVER click on any attachments or links
- NEVER provide personal data such as your full name, address and date of birth – scammers can use this information to steal your identity
- DO NOT BE PRESSURED into donating money, and never make donations by cash or gift card, or send money through transfer agents such as Western Union or Moneygram
- If you think you've been the victim of a scam, then speak to your bank immediately and report any fraud to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or visit <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/>
- Further information on dealing with scams and fraud you can call the Citizens Advice telephone number 03444 111 444, or contact visit the Citizens Advice website.

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/scams/check-if-something-might-be-a-scam/>