

## Be on the Lookout for Stimulus Payment Scams

As we all know by now, the \$2 trillion stimulus package was passed last week, and you are probably practicing social distancing by sitting at home waiting on your check to arrive. We are all excited for this money to come in and for anybody currently out of work, it is needed as quickly as possible. However, scammers are also aware of this. You need to be on the lookout for potential stimulus payment scams. Some things to keep in mind these next few weeks until checks are directly deposited or mailed to you:

1. No government agency will ever contact you by phone. This includes the IRS and Treasury Department. If your phone rings and the person on the other end says they are from one of these agencies or are asking for personal information to get your check to you, **DO NOT BELIEVE THEM**.
2. Likewise, government agencies will not email or text you to collect stimulus payment information. If you receive any emails or texts from anyone stating they are from a government agency, immediately delete it. Do not click on any links, open any attachments, or reply. Something as simple as clicking a link could infect your computer with a virus.
3. Up to this point, individual states are not offering any stimulus packages of their own. State agencies will not contact you via email, text, or phone call. Anything asking for information to claim your state stimulus check is a scam.

Victims or targets of stimulus payment scams should report it immediately to the Federal Trade Commission, [www.ftc.gov/complaint](http://www.ftc.gov/complaint).

So how will the IRS or Treasury Department get in touch with you about your stimulus check? As of now, you should not expect any communication with a government agency before receiving your payment. The IRS is only required to mail you a notice of payment up to 15 days AFTER the payment has been distributed to you. In this notice, they will let you know if your check was mailed or deposited and it will provide a phone number to call if you did not receive your payment. Please stay safe and don't let scammers take advantage of you during these difficult times.

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