



# FRAUD ALERT



May 4, 2020

## FBI Warns of Internet Extortion Scams During COVID-19 Pandemic

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has warned that they have seen a number of reports of online extortion scams during the current "stay-at-home" orders due to the COVID-19 crisis. These scams have been around for a long time but because most of the population is staying at home and using their email and internet to communicate they are seeing an increase in the number of online extortion scams.

The fraudsters are emailing users that they are to release sexually explicit photos and/or videos to friends and family if they do not pay them money. Scammers will adapt their schemes to capitalize on current events such as the COVID-19 pandemic and other high profile new stories.

The FBI warns that many of these emails have similar characteristics. Please read below for just a few of the similarities.

- The email comes from an unknown party and is often written in broken English with grammatical errors.
- Some of the recipient's personal information (such as a user name or password) is provided in the e-mail or letter to make the threat more intimidating.
- The recipient is accused of something that would put them in a compromising situation if it got out, like visiting adult websites.

You can read the whole Press Release from the FBI [here](#).

If you believe you have been a victim of this scam, reach out to your local FBI field office (<https://www.fbi.gov/contact-us>) and file a complaint with the Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) at [www.ic3.gov](http://www.ic3.gov). Please provide any relevant information in your complaint, including the online extortion email with header information.

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## Join Us for Mather Conference Calls this May!

AgeOptions and the Illinois SMP is partnering with Mather and their Telephone Topics program to bring engaging and interesting topics to older adults in the comfort of their own homes. People can just call in!

The Illinois SMP will present twice this month on these calls. You can see the times, dates, and topics below.

Participants can use the following information to call in:

- Call-in number: (855) 880-1246
- Enter Meeting ID when prompted: 386 399 7030#

### **Types of Medicare Fraud**

Miranda Davis, Senior Medicare Patrol Outreach Specialist and Jesus Enriquez, Outreach and Information Specialist, AgeOptions

**Monday, May 11, 9:30 a.m. CT**

We will discuss the different types of Medicare fraud, current trends we are seeing in 2020 and how scammers use different forms of communication to pull off their schemes.

### **Tips to Prevent Medicare Fraud**

Miranda Davis, Senior Medicare Patrol Outreach Specialist and Jesus Enriquez, Outreach and Information Specialist, AgeOptions

**Friday, May 15, 2:30 p.m. CT**

We will go over what to look out for when dealing with fraudsters, tips to avoid getting scammed, signs you can identify if you feel like you are getting scammed and what to do if you do fall victim to one of these Medicare fraud schemes.

As older adults must stay indoors, Mather Telephone Topics provides a great way for them to stay engaged and connected with others. Please share this with your clients. To learn more about Telephone Topics and see the full May schedule, click [here](#).

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## **The 2020 Census and COVID-19**

The 2020 Census is still going on. If you have not completed your 2020 Census, it is the perfect thing to do while sheltering in place. Go to [www.my2020Census.gov](http://www.my2020Census.gov) or call (844)330-2020. If you have completed your Census, encourage your neighbors and friends to fill out their Census.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Census Bureau is delaying when Census takers will be knocking on doors to follow up with people who have not completed the Census. Originally scheduled for mid-May, Census workers will not be knocking on doors until mid-August. If anyone comes to your door or calls you claiming to be from the Census Bureau, they must tell you their name and what they are contacting you for, and you can verify that they work for the Census Bureau by calling (844)330-2020.

The Census Bureau continues to conduct other surveys besides the 2020 Census. While they do not email you to complete the 2020 Census or send other unsolicited emails, there is a new survey about how people are adjusting during this pandemic called the Household Pulse Survey that select households will receive via email ([COVID.survey@census.gov](mailto:COVID.survey@census.gov)).

You can read more about this and how to avoid other Census fraud by clicking [here](#) and if you are ever unsure if you are receiving a legitimate contact from the Census Bureau, you can call (844)330-2020.

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Have a safe and healthy week!

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Please share this Fraud Alert with colleagues, consumers, or other professionals in your area. If you would like to sign up to receive the Fraud Alert directly, visit [click here](#).

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*Washington, D.C. 20201. Grantees undertaking projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Administration for Community Living policy.*

The Illinois SMP at AgeOptions partners with agencies across the state to empower and assist Medicare beneficiaries, their families, and caregivers to prevent, detect, and report health care fraud, errors, and abuse through outreach, counseling, and education.

Please share this Fraud Alert with colleagues, consumers, or other professionals in your area and visit our [website](#) to sign up for our Fraud Alert email list.

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