

# Socially distancing from COVID-19 robocall scams

March 27, 2020

by

Karen Hobbs

Assistant Director, Division of Consumer and Business Education, FTC

Scammers – and scammy companies – are using illegal robocalls to profit from Coronavirus-related fears. Listen to some of the latest scammy robocall pitches, so you can be on the lookout and know how to respond. (Here’s a hint: hang up!)

Illegal robocalls are universally hated, so why do scammers still use them? Because they need only a few people to take the bait for them to make money. They might do that by getting your bank account number, tricking you into handing over gift card PIN codes, or stealing valuable personal information like your Social Security number.

Times of crisis bring out the best in people, and the worst in scammers – as you can hear in these sample calls from Coronavirus scammers pretending to be from the Social Security Administration, offering fake Coronavirus tests to Medicare recipients, and scaring small businesses into buying bogus online listing services.

- [Social Security Administration scam](#)
- [Fake tests for Medicare recipients](#)
- [Small business listing scam](#)

To hear more examples of illegal robocalls exploiting concerns about the Coronavirus, and to stay up to date on the latest FTC information, visit [ftc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.ftc.gov/coronavirus). The FTC is taking the fight against illegal Coronavirus robocalls to companies that help scammy telemarketers. That includes companies that transmit or carry these kinds of calls for telemarketers, or that give the phone numbers that scammers use for people to call them back. Today, [the FTC sent letters to nine VoIP providers and companies that license phone numbers](#), warning them about the penalties for helping telemarketers that use these kinds of illegal robocalls.

Now that you know what Coronavirus robocall scams sound like, make sure others do too – share, link, or like this post, and encourage them to [subscribe](#) to the FTC’s consumer alerts. And, if you get scam calls like these, don’t believe them. Instead:

- **Hang up.** Don’t press any numbers. The recording might say that pressing a number will let you speak to a live operator or remove you from their call list, but it might lead to more robocalls, instead.
- **Consider using a call blocking app or device.** You also can ask your phone provider if it has call-blocking tools. To learn more, go to [ftc.gov/calls](https://www.ftc.gov/calls).

- **Report the call.** Report robocalls at [ftc.gov/complaint](https://www.ftc.gov/complaint). The more we hear from you, the more we can help fight scams.