

SCAM ALERT



Office of the Inspector General
SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

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Inspector General's Office Warns: Hybrid Scams on the Rise



Scammers introduce SSA “long-con” scams through seemingly common problems

Scammers are compounding tactics by using fake Amazon or PayPal tech support emails and text messages to get you to connect with an *imposter* Social Security Administration (SSA) employee who will try to convince you that your Social Security number (SSN) or record is compromised.

The email or text message claims that something is wrong with your Amazon or PayPal account and while trying to fix the alleged issue, the scammer instead states that in searching your computer they found other problems, mainly with your SSN. They then offer to assist by transferring you to someone pretending to be with SSA.

“This type of ‘long-con’ is particularly heinous; other agencies refer to these scams as ‘pig butchering’ because they are designed to drain you of all your resources,” said Special Agent in Charge, Anthony Monaco, Social Security Administration, Office of the Inspector General, Major Case Unit.

This type of hybrid scam is part of a new trend – the SSA “long-con,” where:

- Scammers develop confidence over time, often starting as some other scam, but passing the target to an imposter SSA agent when the first scammer “discovers” a problem in the target’s “SSA records.”
- Scammers often have detailed information on their targets, who are typically of Social Security retirement age. This generates further confidence in the credibility of the scam and scammer.
- The scam often ends with an in-person meeting with an individual either who is either part of the scheme or an unsuspecting participant, such as an Uber driver, during which the target turns over gold, cash, a crypto wallet, or some other currency for “safe keeping,” at the direction of an imposter SSA OIG federal agent.

In a recent [news article](#), a woman in Ohio liquidated over \$500,000 in retirement savings to buy gold and turned it over to scammers who showed up to her house, after a several month “long con,” involving SSA and other government imposters. In an interview, the victim stated, “They were so slick, the guy I talked to everyday had an answer for everything and he was smooth, I had no question he was who he said he was. He didn’t hesitate on any of his answers, he knew what he was doing.”

To learn more about protecting yourself and reporting Social Security-related scams visit

<https://www.ssa.gov/scam/>.



Members of the press may make inquiries to Social Security OIG at oig.press@ssa.gov

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