



Office of the Inspector General SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Scam Alert

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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<https://oig.ssa.gov>
Media Inquiries: oig.dcom@ssa.gov

“Official” letter causing a panic? It’s probably not from SSA!

SSA Inspector General reminds consumers to know the warning signs of a scam

Surprised to get that letter from Social Security? You should take a second look. And then another. Scammers are sending fake letters that closely resemble official Social Security Administration (SSA) and SSA Office of the Inspector General (OIG) letterhead or that of other government agencies, such as the [Federal Trade Commission](#).

Recent reports to SSA OIG indicate that scammers are targeting individuals by producing letters that appear to be from SSA or SSA OIG. Scammers usually send these letters as attachments to emails and text messages. These scammers are trying to steal your money or your identity.

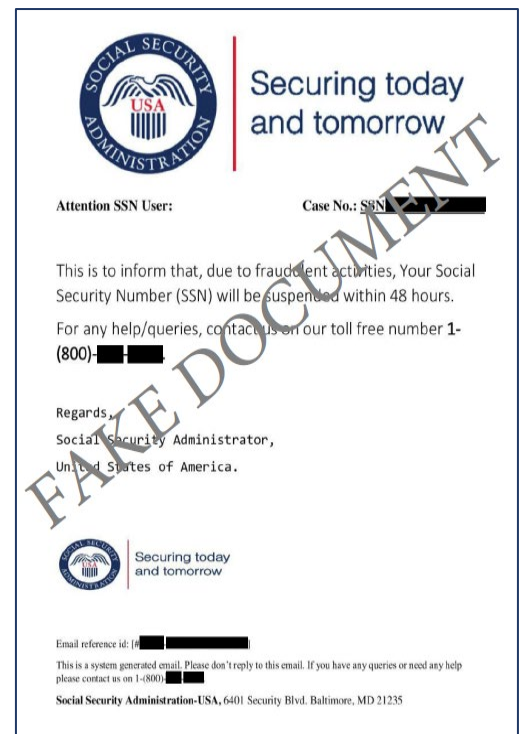
Tactics vary but scams consistently contain red flags, whether it’s a mailed letter, email, text message, or phone call, the scammer will present an unexpected problem or situation and then offer a solution with a hefty price tag. According to the Federal Trade Commission, in 2022, victims of government imposter scams reported losing nearly \$509 million.

“Scammers are counting on the public to be uninformed, but my office is working diligently, and with other government agencies and businesses, to ensure that consumers are aware of recent trends and ploys used by these criminals,” said Gail S. Ennis, Inspector General for SSA. “We will continue to issue alerts to protect the public and advise them to slam the scam by ignoring scammers and reporting them.”

On **March 9, 2023**, [National Slam the Scam Day](#), SSA OIG encourages consumers to be aware of current scam tactics and tips for spotting scam behavior to prevent scammers from succeeding in their crimes. Use **#SlamTheScam** to join the conversation on social media.

Members of the press may make inquiries to Social Security OIG at oig.dcom@ssa.gov or (410) 965-2671.

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HOW A GOVERNMENT IMPOSTER SCAM WORKS

These scams primarily use telephone to contact you, but scammers may also use email, text message, social media, or U.S. mail. Scammers **pretend** to be from an agency or organization you know to gain your trust. Scammers say there is a **problem or a prize**. Scammers **pressure** you to act immediately. Scammers tell you to **pay** in a specific way.

TIPS TO AVOID A SCAM

1. Hang up the call or ignore the message. Talk to someone you trust.
2. Secure your money and personal information. Do not transfer money or buy gift cards.
3. Be skeptical and cautious of unexpected calls and messages.
4. Do not click links or attachments.

IF YOU ARE A VICTIM

Stop talking to the scammer. Notify financial institutions and safeguard accounts. Contact local law enforcement and file a police report. File a complaint with the [FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center \(ic3.gov\)](https://www.ic3.gov). Report Social Security-related scams to [SSA OIG \(oig.ssa.gov\)](https://www.oig.ssa.gov). Report other scams to the [Federal Trade Commission \(ftc.gov\)](https://www.ftc.gov).

Keep financial transaction information and the record of all communications with the scammer.

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