

Beware of Scams and Fraud Schemes

The Office of Inspector General recognizes that we are facing unprecedented times and is alerting the public about potential fraud schemes related to economic stimulus programs offered by the U.S. Small Business Administration in response to the Novel Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19). The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), the largest financial assistance bill to date, includes provisions to help small businesses. Fraudsters have already begun targeting small business owners during these economically difficult times.

Be on the lookout for grant fraud, loan fraud, and phishing.

Report any suspected fraud to
OIG's Hotline online at,
<https://www.sba.gov/about-sba/oversight-advocacy/office-inspector-general/office-inspector-general-hotline>.



GRANTS

- SBA only communicates from email addresses ending in **@sba.gov**. If you are being contacted by someone claiming to be from the SBA who is not using an official SBA email address, you should suspect fraud.



LOANS

- If you are contacted by someone promising to get approval of an SBA loan, but requires any payment up front or offers a high interest bridge loan in the interim, suspect fraud.
- SBA limits the fees a broker can charge a borrower to 3% for loans \$50,000 or less and 2% for loans \$50,000 to \$1,000,000 with an additional ¼% on amounts over \$1,000,000, with a maximum fee of \$30,000. Any attempt to charge more than these fees is inappropriate.
- If you have a question about getting a SBA disaster loan, call 800-659-2955 or send an email to disastercustomerservice@sba.gov.
- If you have questions about other SBA lending products, call SBA's Answer Desk at 800-827-5722 or send an email to answerdesk@sba.gov.



PHISHING

- If you are in the process of applying for an SBA loan and receive email correspondence asking for PII, ensure that the referenced application number is consistent with the actual application number.
- Look out for phishing attacks/scams utilizing the SBA logo. These may be attempts to obtain your personally identifiable information (PII), to obtain personal banking access, or to install ransomware/malware on your computer.
- Any email communication from SBA will come from accounts ending with **sba.gov**.
- The presence of an SBA logo on a webpage **does not** guaranty the information is accurate or endorsed by SBA. Please cross-reference any information you receive with information available at www.sba.gov.

