



HAWAI'I COVID-19 JOINT INFORMATION CENTER

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NEWS RELEASE

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MORE WARNINGS ABOUT SCAMMERS PRETENDING TO BE CONTACT TRACERS

HONOLULU – The State continues to warn of a multitude of scams associated with the COVID-19 virus; the latest involving scammers impersonating contact tracers in an attempt to acquire personal information.

In its efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19, legitimate contact tracers are calling Hawaii residents who may have come into contact with someone who tested positive for the virus. While this is a vital tool to combat the pandemic, residents should verify that the call is coming from an authorized individual before providing any information. Red flags that the caller might be an impersonator include asking for your Social Security Number, bank information, or a form of payment.

According to a Better Business Bureau “Scam Alert,” this is how it works:

“You receive an unsolicited message via text, email, or a social media messenger. The message explains that you’ve come into contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. The message instructs you to self-isolate and provides a link for more information. Alarmed, you are tempted to click and get more details. But don’t fall for it! These links can contain malware that downloads to your device.

Another version of this scam involves a robocall claiming to be part of “contact and tracing efforts.” Again, the call informs you that you’ve been exposed to someone who tested positive for COVID-19. After electing to speak to a representative, the “contact tracer” asks you to verify personal information. This starts with questions about your full name and date of birth but can quickly move to Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and/or financial accounts.”

An authorized contact tracer will not disclose the identity of the person who tested positive but may ask you for names and contact information for everyone you came in close contact with while possibly infectious so that they can contact those individuals as well.

The Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs Office of Consumer Protection (OCP) has a COVID-19 resource website that includes additional information on different types of scams: <https://cca.hawaii.gov/ocp/covid19/>.

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