

# 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 (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.

## Scam and Fraud Scheme Advisory List

1. The SBA does not initiate contact on either 7(a) or Disaster loans. If you are proactively contacted by someone claiming to be from the SBA, suspect fraud.
2. The SBA does not provide grants to small businesses. The SBA provides guarantees to lenders to encourage them to make loans to small businesses. If you are contacted via social media about an SBA grant program for small businesses, suspect fraud.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. The 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 .25% on amounts over \$1,000,000. Any attempt to charge more than these fees is inappropriate.
7. Any email communication from the SBA will come from accounts ending with gov.
8. The presence of an SBA logo on a webpage does not guaranty the information is accurate or endorsed by the SBA. Please cross-reference any information you receive with information available at [sba.gov](https://www.sba.gov).
9. If you have a question about getting an SBA disaster loan, call 800-659-2955 or send an email to [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov).
10. If you have questions about other SBA lending products, call the SBA's Answer Desk at 800-827-5722 or send an email to [answerdesk@sba.gov](mailto:answerdesk@sba.gov).

## Report Fraud

Report any suspected fraud to OIG's Hotline at 800-767-0385 or online at, <https://www.sba.gov/about-sba/oversight-advocacy/office-inspector-general/office-inspector-general-hotline>.