



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

GOVERNOR NED LAMONT

03/16/2021

Governor Lamont and Attorney General Tong Warn Connecticut Residents About COVID-19 Vaccine Scams

(HARTFORD, CT) – Governor Ned Lamont and Attorney General William Tong are warning Connecticut residents to be on alert for potential scams related to COVID-19 vaccines.

The Office of the Attorney General and the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection have recently learned of a new scam in which fraudsters, posing as COVID-19 vaccine manufacturers Moderna and Pfizer, sent consumers a “COVID-19 survey” offering rewards for their opinions about the vaccine. To obtain the so-called reward, consumers are required to provide their credit card information, supposedly for “shipping purposes.” State officials are warning residents not to be fooled – this is a scam that is designed to rip people off for money.

In another scheme, fraudsters sent a letter impersonating the governor’s office that suggests the vaccines are dangerous and directing consumers to a website that attempts to capitalize on people’s fears and is yet another way for bad actors to scam people out of information and money. The COVID-19 vaccine is medically proven to be safe and effective, and consumers should not visit links that may be set up to steal their information.

Finally, there have been recent reports of scammers who pose as vaccinators and ask for sensitive information, such as Social Security numbers and bank information. Consumers will never be asked for this information to receive the vaccine.

State officials are offering the following tips for consumers to protect themselves against vaccine-related scams:

- **Do not pay anything to sign up for the COVID-19 vaccine.** In addition, do not trust promotional offers related to the vaccine. Those who have specific questions can check with their state or local health departments or with their healthcare providers.
- **Ignore sales ads related to the vaccine.** The vaccine cannot be bought anywhere. It is only available at federal and state-approved locations, and is being offered at no cost to anyone.
- **Beware of unsolicited emails or texts concerning the vaccine, including offers of rewards or payments.** While some people may receive emails or texts from their healthcare providers or authorized vaccine providers, those contacts only come after they have signed up for them. If you receive a contact that seems suspicious, consumers can contact their healthcare or vaccine provider.

- **Do not share personal, financial, or health information with unfamiliar people.** Nobody from a vaccine distribution site, healthcare provider, pharmacy, or health care payer like a private insurance company or Medicare will call, text, or email consumers asking for their Social Security number, credit card number, or bank account number in connection with the vaccine.

“We can’t let scam artists stand in anyone’s way when it comes to getting the vaccine,” **Governor Lamont said.** “The truth is the vaccine is safe. The public health officials I trust have communicated that to all of us, and if I wasn’t sure of the vaccine’s safety, I wouldn’t have taken it myself. Please, remember that if something seems like misinformation, it probably is, and you can always get the most updated facts on our website, and from you trusted community leaders.”

“Getting vaccinated is one of the most important things you can do to protect yourself and your family from COVID-19, but it’s also an open door for scammers to take advantage of widespread confusion and anxiety,” **Attorney General Tong said.** “If you get an unsolicited message offering rewards or payments related to the vaccine, ignore them and report it to state and local authorities.”

“The prevalence of these scams should not discourage consumers from getting vaccinated,” **Connecticut Consumer Protection Commissioner Michelle Seagull said.** “But consumers should keep their guard up, protect their personal information, and take steps to avoid becoming the victim of a scam. Consumers also play an important role in preventing scams by reporting suspicious behavior.”

“It’s important that people know these vaccines have been tested, are safe, and are highly effective in protecting you from hospitalization, severe illness, and death due to COVID-19,” **Connecticut Acting Public Health Commissioner Dr. Deidre Gifford said.** “The healthcare provider you receive your vaccine from will need some basic information from you, but you should not give personal health information to anyone who sends you an unsolicited request. If you receive mail, calls, or see other ads that indicate this vaccine isn’t safe, don’t believe it. Do your research first. Visit our website and talk with those you trust if you have questions rather than taking unfounded claims at face value.”

If anyone becomes aware of a vaccine-related scam or believes they may be the victim of a scam, they should file a complaint with state and local authorities using the following methods:

- Suspicious activities related to vaccine distribution practices or concerns for public health should be reported to local law enforcement or local public health officials.
- Suspected fraud or business-related scams can be reported to the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection by visiting ct.gov/DCP or sending an email to dcp.complaints@ct.gov.
- If anyone believes they have been the victim of a scam or have been contacted by a scammer, they should contact the Office of the Attorney General at 860-808-5318 or attorney.general@ct.gov.

For the most up-to-date information about where, when, and how to receive COVID-19 vaccines in Connecticut, visit the state's website at ct.gov/covidvaccine.

General information about the vaccine is available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19.

The state's 2-1-1 information hotline is also available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to answer questions.

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