



## U.S. Department of Justice

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Dear Law Enforcement Partners:

The COVID-19 pandemic has created many legal challenges for every member and layer of law enforcement. I am proud of the partnerships that we have forged and it is precisely those relationships that will provide the citizens of Alabama the best ability to avoid becoming victims of coronavirus-related frauds and crimes. Together we must resolve to prevent a public health crisis from becoming a public safety crisis. Our commitment to maintaining the rule of law must not become a coronavirus casualty.

This pandemic has brought to the fore the very best among us. Perhaps the best example continues to be the men and women serving in your agencies who have provided leadership and inspiration to the public. Regrettably, not everyone shares their decency of character. As we have too often come to expect, during times like this, there are those unfortunate exceptions among us who have chosen to prey upon both the hope and fears of our citizens. My office has become increasingly aware of myriad coronavirus-related schemes, frauds, and crimes that have the potential to threaten the safety and well-being of every man, woman, and child in Alabama. Therefore, it is incumbent upon each of us to maintain our standards and readiness during this time so that those we serve can avoid becoming crime victims.

In an effort to provide as much current COVID-19 related crime intelligence to you, I have compiled some of the most common and concerning criminal activities taking advantage of this public health crisis. These criminal behaviors, specific to COVID-19, include:

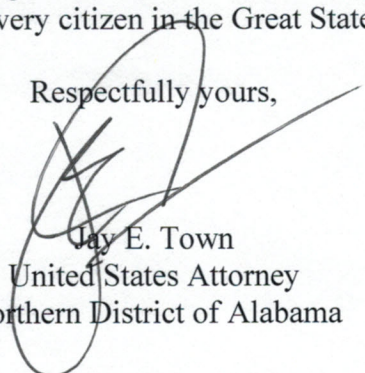
- Robocalls making fraudulent offers to sell respirator masks with no intent of delivery;
- Fake COVID-19-related applications and websites that install malware or ransomware;
- Phishing emails asking for money or presenting malware;
- Social media scams fraudulently seeking donations or claiming to provide stimulus funds if the recipient enters his or her bank account number;
- Sales of fake test kits, cures, immunity pills, and personal protective equipment (PPE);
- Fraudulent offers for free COVID-19 testing in order to obtain health insurance beneficiary information that is used to submit false medical claims for unrelated, unnecessary, or fictitious testing or services;

- Prescription drug schemes involving the submission of medical claims for unnecessary anti-retroviral treatments or other drugs that are marketed as purported cures;
- Price gouging and hoarding of critical PPE and sanitary products;
- Robberies of patients separating from hospitals or doctor offices;
- Robberies of postal or package delivery personnel;
- Threats of violence against mayors and other public officials;
- Threats to intentionally infect other people;
- Increased threats of human trafficking; and
- Increased threats of child exploitation, especially on the internet of things.

The crime intelligence above is but a snapshot of continually shifting criminal landscape. This is why it is critical that we continue to share information about the coronavirus-related criminal activities we are seeing in Alabama and elsewhere. This cooperative only serves to improve our opportunities to educate the public about these activities, disrupt these activities, and bring to justice those who engage in these activities. Both state and federal charging options are available to us. To provide additional support to you and your agencies, I have designated senior Assistant United States Attorney (AUSA) Robert Posey as my Coronavirus Coordinator to assist in the investigation and prosecution of all coronavirus-related crimes. Contact me or AUSA Posey directly at the number provided if you have any questions, data, or crime intelligence that you would like to bring to our attention.

Please pass my personal gratitude to every man and woman serving in your agency. It is no surprise that they have all most certainly shown their mettle during this crisis. I am very thankful for the vital work that you and your agencies do each day for the people of Alabama and continue to pray for the health and safety of every citizen in the Great State.

Respectfully yours,



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