



How to Protect Yourself Against a Recent Social Security Scam

Once again, households are reminded that they must be vigilant when protecting their personal data. A recent social security scam has appeared on the radar targeting the generation of Americans receiving benefits.

The scammer's tactics are not unlike what we have seen in other scams in which the criminals impersonate government employees -- such as the Internal Revenue Service scam we have seen in recent years.

In the latest iteration, scammers -- often calling from a 323 area code -- will call households pretending to be from the Social Security Administration. Usually the scammer will try to lure victims by saying that they are entitled to a 1.7 percent cost-of-living-adjustment in their Social Security benefits. To get the benefit, the victim is asked to verify their personal information such as: name, date of birth and Social Security number.

With the pilfered information in hand, the scammer is able to call the SSA and direct the victim's benefits to their own account. The scammer can also use the information for other nefarious purposes, including opening up credit cards for fraudulent use.

The SSA wants to remind households that although it does sometimes contact people by phone, they will never ask for personal information. Any suspicious, unsolicited calls from people pretending to be from the SSA should be reported to the Office of the Inspector General at 1-800-269-0271 or online via <https://oig.ssa.gov/report>.

While this scam is limited to the SSA, households are warned to be cautious of any entity that requests personal information via phone and internet. Most government agencies and businesses will not make unsolicited demands of personal information. Practicing skepticism is one step to take to protect yourself.

"You must be very confident that the source is the correct business party and your information will be secure after you release it," said Gale Stallworth Stone, Acting Inspector General of Social Security.

For more information, or to discuss specific concerns, contact your Anchin Relationship partner or a member of Anchin Private Client at 212.840.3456.



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