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District Attorney

NEWS RELEASE

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District Attorney Issues Warning of Covid-19 Scams

VENTURA, California – District Attorney Gregory D. Totten announced today that consumers should be on the lookout for scammers trying to take advantage of county residents during this public health emergency. Federal and local law enforcement agencies are reporting an increase in scams related to the COVID-19 pandemic including:

- Fake Cures/Testing – Scammers are trying to capitalize on people’s fears by selling bogus products online which claim to treat or prevent COVID-19 such as vaccinations, treatments and home testing kits.
- Fake Suppliers – Online scammers are posing as legitimate companies with available supplies of in-demand products, such as face masks, hand sanitizers and household goods, who take your money and deliver nothing.
- Fake Government Scams – Using robocalls, e-mails and text messages, scammers claim to be from legitimate government agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), then attempt to obtain your personal identification number (PIN) or social security numbers and bank account information. Due to the recent passing of the federal economic relief legislation, it is anticipated that scammers will attempt to take advantage of consumers with robocalls and phishing e-mails to “verify” your PIN. The District Attorney reminds county residents to never provide your PIN over the phone, through a text message or e-mail correspondence.
- Fake Charities – Scammers try to take advantage of county residents’ generosity during the COVID-19 pandemic by using names similar to legitimate charities and obtain donations that never make it to a legitimate cause.

To protect yourself from becoming a victim of one of these scams, it is important to verify you are dealing with a legitimate organization when making purchases or donations online. Do not open attachments in e-mails or click on links from senders you do not recognize. Do not provide your PIN in response to an e-mail, robocall, or text message from a phone number you do not recognize.

For information and recent updates specifically related to COVID-19 go to

<https://www.vcemergency.com/>.

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The Ventura County District Attorney's Office is the public prosecutor for the county's 850,000 residents. The office employs approximately 280 employees including attorneys, investigators, victim advocates, and other professional support staff who strive to seek justice, ensure public safety, and protect the rights of crime victims.

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