

MERSEYSIDE POLICE ADVICE

COVID-19 SCAMS BE AWARE OF... SCAMS EXPLOITING FEARS BY OFFERING PRODUCTS OR SERVICES - AT HUGE PRICES

Selling protective masks & hand sanitiser. Check the online shopping site as this could be fake.

Offering vaccines for sale. There is not a vaccine or 'cure' as of yet.

Offering COVID-19 home test kits for sale. Even if a genuine product, Public Health England states that use of these kind of products are not advised. OTHER TYPES OF FRAUD Fraudsters, claiming to be from the government to take swabs and gaining entry to the home, where pressure sales are made, or distraction burglary.

Rogue 'community helpers' targeting households, knocking on older people's households to offer shopping collection and to run errands. They are taking cash or bank cards and getting pin numbers. DO NOT hand over your bank card. NEVER share your pin number.

Phishing Emails from a fake HMRC website offering government aid by way of a tax refund in light of the coronavirus. Victims are encouraged to share personal and bank details.

Fraudsters purporting to be from research organisation's affiliated with the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) have contacted potential victims via email. They claim to be able to provide the recipient with a list of coronavirus infected people in their area. In order to access this information, the victim needs to click on a link, which leads to a malicious website, or is asked to make a payment in Bitcoin.

COVID-19 SCAMS HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF... Watch out for scam messages:

Don't click on the links or attachments in suspicious emails, and never respond to unsolicited messages and calls that ask for your personal or financial details.

Shopping online: If you're making a purchase from a company or person you don't know and trust, carry out some research first, and ask a friend or family member for advice before completing the purchase. If you decide to go ahead with the purchase, use a credit card if you have one, as most major credit card providers ensure online purchases.

If someone you don't know offers you help, try to find out more about them, specifically where they live and how you can contact them should you need help. Take measures to check the identity of the person offering you help and verify they are who they claim to be. Don't hand-over money to someone you don't know who is offering to help you. Offers of help for most things should be free of charge, for example dog walking. If someone offers to do your shopping, ask for a receipt so that you can pay them to cover the cost of the items.

Never give away your bank card or bank details, including any passwords or PIN number. Don't feel pressured to accept help. If possible, call a friend or family member to discuss the help you've been offered.