



GARY R. HERBERT
Governor

SPENCER J. COX
Lieutenant Governor

State of Utah Department of Commerce

CHRIS PARKER
Interim Executive Director

Daniel O'Bannon
Director, Division of Consumer Protection

April 15, 2020

MEDIA ADVISORY

Department of Commerce Warns Consumers About Coronavirus and Stimulus Scams, and Unveils Fraud-Fighting Website

(For immediate release) SALT LAKE CITY, Utah – With economic relief payments, expanded unemployment benefits, loan programs, and other COVID-19-related initiatives, the Utah Department of Commerce is warning consumers to continue to be on the lookout for scams related to COVID-19, including stimulus and other government programs. To help consumers spot scams, the Department launched a new website today, targeted at informing consumers of the latest coronavirus-related scams. The website, <https://fraudsquad.utah.gov/coronavirus.html>, will be updated on a regular basis.

“As Utahns continue to flatten the curve, the Department of Commerce reminds consumers of the danger posed by scammers using COVID-19 as a hook to catch victims for their illegal schemes,” said Chris Parker, Interim Executive Director of the Department. “Predators’ pretended concerns for public health shouldn’t lure Utahns into being swindled.”

The new coronavirus scams website is part of a broader initiative by the Utah Department of Commerce – the Utah Fraud Squad. The initiative invites citizens to be part of the Utah Fraud Squad by being educated, helping others, and reporting fraud. “We all have a role to play in stopping fraud,” said Daniel O’Bannon, Director of the Division of Consumer Protection. “When scams abound, the way to stop fraud is to spot the scam, warn others, and report it to authorities.” Information about the Utah Fraud Squad can be found at <https://fraudsquad.utah.gov/>.

The Utah Attorney General’s Office shares the Department of Commerce’s concerns about coronavirus-related scams. “We stand ready to assist,” said Utah Attorney General Sean Reyes. “Utahns will not tolerate this illegal and abhorrent behavior. We will hold people accountable to the law.”

Consumers are encouraged to continue to report fraudulent and illegal activity to the [Division of Consumer Protection](#), including price gouging. Consumers can also report criminal fraud to the Utah Attorney General’s Office.

#####

For Media Inquiries:
Brian Maxwell
Public Information Officer
(801) 859-7400