



ON MY OWN

News For Young Adults from InTouch Credit Union

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Don't Be Fooled by These 6 Government Impostor Scams



Government impostor scams decreased in 2021 after peaking during the pandemic, but scam victims still lost twice as much money that year to fake government agents, according to new research from the Better Business Bureau (BBB).

With government impostor scams, someone claims they're with a government agency so they can swindle money or personal information from unsuspecting victims.

Individuals aren't the only ones getting fooled by government impersonators, either. Government impostor scams were the second-most common scam reported by businesses to the BBB Scam Tracker in 2021.

How do government impostor scams work?

Government impostor scams typically begin with a phone call. The person on the other end claims to be with a government agency such as Medicare, the IRS or the Social Security

Administration (SSA), the most commonly impersonated agency used for impostor scams.

Sometimes the scammer scares you by threatening arrest if you don't send gift cards or provide personal information. An SSA impostor may tell you that your identity was stolen. Then they ask you to verify your Social Security number and other personal information.

Government impostors may even find you through your friends' social media hacked accounts. The most common scam is one where the government faker tells you about a lucrative grant program. To receive the grant, however, you must first pay a small fee.

Once you pay it, the scammer adds on even more fees. Of course, after paying all those fees, you never receive the "grant" or any of your money back.

In 2021, total reported losses for government impostor scams topped \$103 million, according to the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) Consumer Sentinel Network. Social Security government impostor scams alone exceeded \$21 million. IRS impostor scams totaled more than \$1 million.

Just because government impostor scammers are so convincing they fool plenty of people doesn't mean you must become their next trusting victim.



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