

OIG FRAUD BULLETIN

➔ Fraud Prevention Tips and Resources



★ ★ OFFICE of ★ ★
INSPECTOR GENERAL

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

FOR RENTERS

March 2022

Be aware that dishonest people may take advantage and could attempt to harm renters through the following scams or forms of harassment.

- ➔ **Upfront payment** - HUD assistance programs do not require upfront payments. Offers for obtaining rental assistance or help with an eviction that require upfront payments are typically not legitimate.
- ➔ **Spoofing** - Individuals may use “spoofed” phone numbers or emails to make their communications appear legitimate. Verify phone numbers and email addresses before providing any information.
- ➔ **Unsolicited Contact** - Be suspicious of unsolicited contact from persons reporting to be affiliated with your landlord or apartment’s management company. Request the person’s name and contact information; then contact your landlord using your normal method.
- ➔ **Harassment** - It is illegal for landlords to attempt to exploit your financial situation with unwanted touching or comments, harassment, or requests for dates or sexual favors. It is also illegal for landlords to try to coerce you into a sexual relationship in exchange for waiving rental payments. This behavior will not be tolerated and any landlord or other person who has control over housing and engages in this sort of misconduct may be referred to the U.S. Department of Justice for action. It is illegal for landlords or staff to engage in this behavior under the Fair Housing Act. To report sexual harassment call the Sexual Harassment in Housing Initiative Hotline at 1-844-380-6178 or TTY: 202-305-1882 or email fairhousing@usdoj.gov.

Remember, HUD staff will not contact you directly unless you have contacted them first.

Renters should report possible fraud to HUD’s Office of Inspector General Hotline at 1-800-347-3735 or the official website, <https://www.hudoig.gov/hotline>.

Renters who experience sexual harassment or discrimination from their landlord or prospective landlord may also contact HUD’s Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity at (800) 669-9777 or submit an online complaint at https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/online-complaint# How to File.

If you think you may be a victim of a fraud scheme, report it to the HUD Office of Inspector General by calling the HUD OIG Hotline at 1-800-347-3735, visiting www.hudoig.gov/hotline, or clicking the “REPORT FRAUD” button.

REPORT FRAUD