



# Social Media Scams

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## Beware of Scams Involving Fake HUD Grants or Housing Assistance on Social Media

Be on the lookout for fraudsters impersonating HUD employees using social media schemes to offer you grants or housing assistance from HUD and asking for payment or personal information to receive grant funds.

Fraudsters may use social media or other tactics to steal money from you by offering fake HUD benefits or fake HUD grants. This includes using social media platforms, texting apps, emails, or similar sophisticated technology, such as ChatGPT to contact with you and direct you to fraudulent websites, online chats, chat boxes, or live “customer support” lines to get your personal or financial information.

This information may include your social security number, date of birth, address, bank account number, login information, or photocopies of your personal identification (driver’s license). It may also involve asking you to pay a small “administrative” or “application” fee to initiate the process to receive a HUD grant or other housing benefits. Fraudsters may also provide a link to a fake HUD website fake or impersonate a HUD employee, HUD contractor, public housing employee, or other HUD-funded individual.

***HUD will never ask you to pay money to receive a grant or obtain housing assistance or message you through social media to begin a grant application.***

### HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF:

- Do not respond to, send money, or provide information to anyone who contacts you through social media, email, or other means offering free HUD grants, money, or housing assistance.
- STOP AND ASK: “Is this too good to be true?” Get feedback from your friends, family members, or trusted colleagues. Fraudsters are counting on you to rush to take advantage of these fake grant or benefit opportunities. Don’t be fooled into moving too fast for what seems like a good deal.
- Do a quick internet search on the person, organization, or company contacting you before providing any information to determine legitimacy.
- If contacted by a prospective landlord regarding HUD benefits, contact your [local public housing agency](#) first, to verify the landlord and their contact information.



- Official HUD websites will always use a “.gov” domain. Be wary of websites that claim to be official HUD sites from other domains, such as .org, .com, or .us. (n However, some legitimate local public housing agencies do use .com or .org). Beware of spelling errors in the website address – if the entity or person it claims to be from does not match the spelling of the website address that may be a sign that it is a scam.

For more information on how to recognize and avoid grant scams, visit:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/learn-grants/grant-fraud/grant-related-scams.html>.

If you think you may have been a victim of a government grant scam, you can file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission online or call toll-free 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357); TTY: 1-866-653-4261.

You can also report fraud schemes involving public housing or other HUD-funded government programs or benefits to the HUD OIG Hotline at 1-800-347-3735 or visit <https://www.hudoig.gov/hotline>.

