



COVID-19 fraud, scams and schemes highlighted on OIG COVID-19 Portal

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The COVID-19 public health emergency has created opportunities for fraudsters to take advantage of the pandemic for their own gain. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Inspector General (OIG) created a [COVID-19 Portal](#) to inform the health care community and the public about COVID-19 related fraud, scams and schemes, and to provide information about the OIG's oversight activities related to COVID-19.

On the landing page of the OIG COVID-19 Portal, there is an overview of the OIG's oversight of the COVID-19 response and recovery and a link to their [COVID-19 Response Strategic Plan](#), which describes four goals driving their oversight activities and the supporting objectives:

1. Protect people
2. Protect funds
3. Protect infrastructure
4. Promote effectiveness of HHS programs – now and into the future

The OIG Portal also includes:

- A [COVID-19 Fraud Alert](#), which is regularly updated with the latest information about fraud schemes the agency is seeing related to the COVID-19 public health emergency and tips on how people can protect themselves from becoming a victim

of these schemes.

- [Press releases](#) related to COVID-19 enforcement actions to highlight the schemes and scams taking place during the pandemic, including [falsely marketing herbal mixtures as an FDA-approved treatment for COVID-19](#), [embezzlement of Provider Relief Fund monies](#), [scams that take advantage of relaxation of rules and controls](#) during the pandemic, [illegitimate contact tracing services](#), and [false promises of priority access to the COVID-19 vaccine in exchange for individuals' medical or personal information](#).
- Policy statements and guidance related to COVID-19, including [FAQs](#) to provide information about how the OIG is interpreting and applying its authorities under the Anti-Kickback Statute and Civil Monetary Penalties Law to arrangements directly connected to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- A [link to submit questions](#) regarding the OIG's authorities during the COVID-19 public health emergency as a way for the health care community to potentially get quick answers to questions about whether the OIG would pursue an enforcement action regarding specific conduct.
- [Completed OIG audits and evaluations](#) assessing COVID-19 preparedness and response in programs that serve HHS beneficiaries and a [link to see OIG audits, evaluations and inspections related to COVID-19 that are currently underway or planned](#).

Despite the vaccination rate picking up across the country, there is no indication that fraudulent schemes related to COVID-19 will slow down. Health care entities will continue to find valuable information within the OIG's COVID-19 Portal, even as operations continue to return to normal.

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