

Social Security Scams

People who receive Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits are often victimized by misleading advertisers. Often, these companies offer Social Security services for a fee, even though these same services are available free directly from Social Security. These services include obtaining a:

- corrected Social Security card showing a bride's married name;
- Social Security card to replace a lost card;
- *Social Security Statement*; and
- Social Security number (SSN) for a child.

Some direct scammers suggest that Social Security is in dire financial shape and that people risk losing their Social Security or Medicare benefits unless they send a contribution or membership fee to the advertiser.

Scam artists have become shrewd. Never reply to an email claiming to be from Social Security and asking for your SSN or personal information. The Social Security will never ask you for your SSN or personal information by email.

If you receive or see what you believe is misleading advertising for Social Security services, send the complete mailing, including the envelope, to:

Office of the Inspector General Fraud Hotline
Social Security Administration
P.O. Box 17768
Baltimore, MD 21235

If you think you've been the victim of an identity thief, you should contact the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/microsites/idtheft. Or, you can call 1-877-IDTHEFT (1-877-438-4338); TTY 1-866-653-4261.

- Learn more about identity theft at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10064.html.
- Read about misleading advertising at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10005.html.