



Department of Justice

United States Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 2020

CONTACT: PAO Daryl Fields
(210) 384-7440

U.S. ATTORNEY BASH URGES THE PUBLIC TO REPORT SUSPECTED COVID-19 FRAUD

AUSA Michael Galdo Appointed as WDTX Coronavirus Fraud Coordinator

U.S. Attorney John F. Bash today urged the public to report suspected fraud schemes related to COVID-19 (the Coronavirus) by calling the National Center for Disaster Fraud (NCDF) hotline (1-866-720-5721) or to the NCDF e-mail address disaster@leo.gov.

In coordination with the Department of Justice, Attorney General William Barr has directed U.S. Attorneys to prioritize the investigation and prosecution of Coronavirus fraud schemes. The NCDF Hotline can receive and enter complaints into a centralized system that can be accessed by all U.S. Attorneys, as well as Justice Department litigating and law enforcement components to identify, investigate and prosecute fraud schemes.

“ ,” stated U.S. Attorney Bash. *[Fraud related]*

Some examples of these schemes include:

- Individuals and businesses selling fake cures for COVID-19 online and engaging in other forms of fraud.
- Phishing emails from entities posing as the World Health Organization or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Malicious websites and apps that appear to share Coronavirus-related information to gain and lock access to your devices until payment is received.
- Seeking donations fraudulently for illegitimate or non-existent charitable organizations.
- Medical providers obtaining patient information for COVID-19 testing and then using that information to fraudulently bill for other tests and procedures.

In a memorandum to U.S. Attorneys issued March 19, Deputy Attorney General Jeffrey Rosen also directed each U.S. Attorney to appoint a Coronavirus Fraud Coordinator to serve as the legal counsel for the federal judicial district on matters relating to the Coronavirus, direct the prosecution of Coronavirus-related crimes, and to conduct outreach and awareness activities. Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael Galdo is the Coronavirus Fraud Coordinator for the Western District of Texas.

(more)

WDTX Coronavirus Coordinator announcement

March 20, 2020

Page 2

The NCDF can receive and enter complaints into a centralized system that can be accessed by all U.S. Attorneys, as well as Justice Department litigating and law enforcement components to identify, investigate and prosecute fraud schemes. The NCDF coordinates complaints with 16 additional federal law enforcement agencies, as well as state Attorneys General and local authorities.

#####

The year 2020 marks the 150th anniversary of the Department of Justice. Learn more about the history of our agency at www.Justice.gov/Celebrating150Years.