



News Release

SOCIAL SECURITY

Social Security and OIG Launch Public Service Announcement Campaign

Agency Alerts Public about Telephone Impersonation Scheme

The Social Security Administration (SSA) and its Office of the Inspector General (OIG) launched a joint Public Service Announcement (PSA) campaign addressing a nationwide telephone impersonation scheme. Social Security and the OIG continue to receive reports from across the country about fraudulent phone calls from people falsely claiming to be Social Security employees. Calls can even “spoof” Social Security’s national customer service number as the incoming number on the caller ID. The new PSAs will air on TV and radio stations across the country to alert the public to remain vigilant against potential fraud.

“We urge you to always be cautious and to avoid providing sensitive information such as your Social Security number or bank account information to unknown people over the phone or Internet,” said Nancy A. Berryhill, Acting Commissioner of Social Security. “If you receive a call and are not expecting one, you must be extra careful – you can always get the caller’s information, hang up, and contact the official phone number of the business or agency the caller claims to represent. Do not reveal personal data to a stranger who calls you.”

Social Security employees do occasionally contact people--generally those who have ongoing business with the agency--by telephone for business purposes. However, Social Security employees will never threaten a person or promise a Social Security benefit approval, or increase, in exchange for information. In those cases, the call is fraudulent and people should not engage with the caller. If a person receives these calls, he or she should report the information to the OIG Fraud Hotline at 1-800-269-0271 or online at <https://oig.ssa.gov/report>.

“These calls appear to be happening across the country, so we appreciate SSA’s partnership in this national public outreach effort,” said Gail S. Ennis, the Inspector

General for the Social Security Administration. “Our message to the public is simply this: If you or someone you know receives a questionable call claiming to be from SSA or the OIG, just hang up.”

The new PSA addressing the telephone impersonation scheme is available online at www.youtube.com/socialsecurity and below:



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Protecting what's important to you...



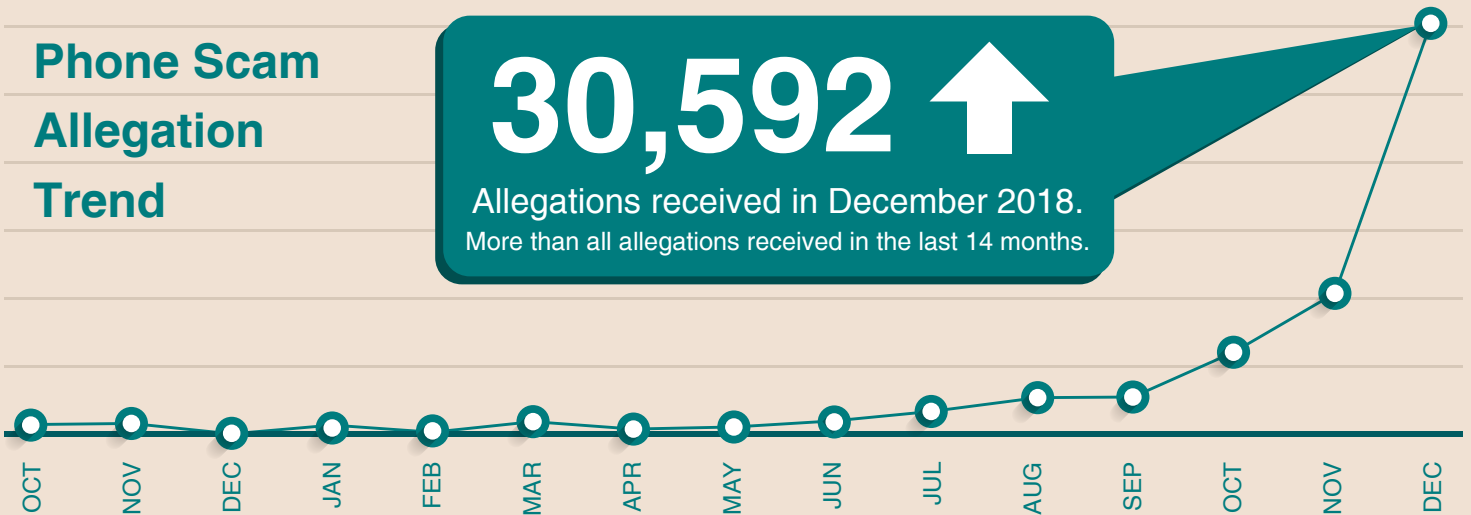
Securing today
and tomorrow

Social Security is committed to protecting your personal information and your benefits. Impersonation phone scams are increasing. Don't be fooled. Follow these tips to protect yourself.

Phone Scam Allegation Trend

30,592 ↑

Allegations received in December 2018.
More than all allegations received in the last 14 months.



What to look out for



An automated call saying your Social Security number has been “suspended for suspicion of illegal activity” and asking you to contact them to resolve the issue.



Calls “spoofing” Social Security’s phone number.



Callers using threatening language, such as arrest or other legal action.



Any call asking you to provide credit card information or to add money to gift cards.

Be Alert

- We may call in some situations, if you have ongoing business with us.
- Social Security will **never**:
 - » Threaten you for information.
 - » Promise a benefit increase in exchange for personal information.



Be Active

- If you receive a questionable call from someone claiming to be us, just hang up.
- Report suspicious calls or emails online at oig.ssa.gov/report or by calling **1-800-269-0271**.
- Learn more to protect yourself at identitytheft.gov/ssa