

## **Hertfordshire County Council - Advice for consumers – Be alert to vaccine fraud**

Criminals are using the COVID-19 vaccine as a way to target the public by tricking them to hand over cash or financial details. They are sending convincing-looking text messages letting people know they are eligible for the vaccine or phoning people directly pretending to be from the NHS, or local pharmacy.

### **PEOPLE ARE WARNED TO BE ALERT TO THESE SCAMS:**

The NHS will:

NEVER ask for payment - the vaccine is free

NEVER ask for your bank details

NEVER arrive unannounced at your home to administer the vaccine

NEVER ask you to prove your identity by sending copies of personal documents such as your passport.

### **Top 4 Vaccine Scams**

#### **TEXT MESSAGES**

People are asked to press a number on their keypad or to send a text message to confirm they wish to receive the vaccine, doing so is likely to result in a charge being applied to their phone bill and fraudsters collecting personal information to use again.

#### **PHONE CALLS**

Victims receive a phone call from a fake caller offering the vaccine for a fee or asking for bank details.

#### **WEBSITES**

Fake URL links to convincing-looking NHS vaccine booking forms, these look like official NHS forms and may contain some personal information already, at the end of the form it asks for their bank details.

#### **IN PERSON**

Fraudsters are calling unannounced at the homes of victims by pretending to be from the NHS to administer the vaccine there and then, in exchange for a cash payment.

**If you receive a call you believe to be fraudulent, hang up. If you are suspicious about an email you have received, forward it to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk).**

**Suspicious text messages should be forwarded to the number 7726 which is free of charge.**

**If you believe you have been the victim of fraud or identity theft, you should report this directly to Action Fraud either online or via phone on 0300 123 2040. If you have any information relating to vaccine fraud you can report and stay 100% anonymous by contacting Crimestoppers COVID Fraud Hotline online or call 0800 587 5030.**

