



Police Department
"Pride in Service"

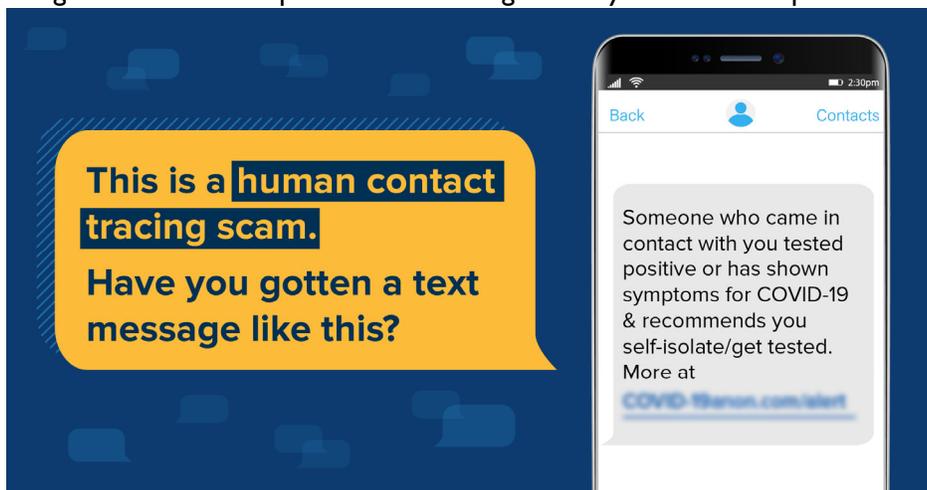


COVID-19 Contact Tracing Text Message Scams

San Marino Police Department would like to provide helpful tips to avoid being a victim of the COVID-19 contact tracing text message scam. Contact tracing is the process of identifying people who have come in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, instructing them to quarantine and monitoring their symptoms daily. Contact tracers are usually hired by a state's department of public health and generally receive your number from infected persons in which you may have had close contact with. Those names and numbers are often kept in an online system. Usually you may receive an initial text message from the health department advising you will be receiving a call from a specific number. It is important to know the tracer who calls will not ask for any personal information, like a social security number. At the end of the call, you may be asked if you would like to enroll in a text message program, which sends daily health and safety reminders until the 14 day quarantine ends. These text messages will never ask you to click on any links or ask you for any money.

Here are several other steps you can take to protect yourself from text scammers:

- Never provide your social security, bank account, or credit card number to anyone who advises they are a contact tracer and work for the Health Department.
- If you receive any text messages that ask you to click on a link, do not take the bait by clicking on the link. Example of a text message sent by a scammer is pictured below



By clicking on the link it can download software onto your device, giving scammers access to your personal and financial information. Ignore and delete these scam messages.

- Protect your online accounts by using multi-factor authentication. It requires two or more credentials to log in to your account, which makes it harder for scammers to log in to your accounts if they do get your username and password.
- Enable auto updates for the operating systems on your electronic devices. Make sure your apps also auto-update so you get the latest security patches that can protect from malware.
- Back up the data on your devices regularly, so you won't lose valuable information if a device gets malware or ransomware.

If you have any question please feel free to Contact the San Marino Police at (626) 300-0720.