



NEWS FROM SCDC

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
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1.800.922.1594 (toll free in SC)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Scam Alert: Government Grant Scams

Columbia, SC... The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs (SCDCA) is urging consumers to beware of government grant scams.

Fraudsters call consumers in an effort to convince them that they are going to receive a government grant ranging from \$9,000 to \$50,000. The consumer is then asked to either wire transfer a payment for the grant or release bank account information so the scammer can direct deposit the grant money.

Before sending money or giving out bank account or other personal information to a caller, consumers should follow these tips:

1. **Be aware.** Stop and think- did you even apply for a grant? If not, this should be your first red flag the caller is a scammer!
2. **Don't be fooled by fake names.** Scammers are skilled at making their story sound convincing. While someone claiming to be from the "Federal Grants Administration" might sound official, there is no such agency.
3. **Never verify information.** When fielding phone calls from persons asking about personal information, feel free to hang up. Contact the business directly at the number you know is correct to verify the call.
4. **Don't pay for something that is supposed to be free.** A real government agency won't ask you to pay a processing fee for a grant you've already been awarded.
5. **"I know this is a scam!"** Let the scammer know they will be reported and will not be getting payment or information from you! Share your experience with your friends and family to help prevent them from becoming victims of this scam, too.
6. **Looking for a grant?** Visit www.grants.gov or your local library to search and apply for a grant. Also, check with your local library branch to see if any free grant workshops are

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on the calendar. There are companies out there that may offer to prepare grant applications for you for a fee. Be wary of these offers and remember that you can apply for grants for free!

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SCDCA aims to protect consumers from inequities in the marketplace through advocacy, complaint mediation, enforcement and education. To file a complaint or get information on consumer issues, visit

www.consumer.sc.gov or call toll-free, 1.800.922.1594.

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