**For Immediate Release**

*[DATE]*

[AGENT NAME]

[AGENCY NAME]

[PHONE]

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**With Seniors Stuck at Home, Be Vigilant About Phone Scams**

*Scammers Out in Full-Force During COVID-19 Pandemic*

**[CITY, STATE] -** With more people staying at home among the COVID-19 pandemic, either by order or caution, it is more vital than ever to be aware of phone scams. Seniors are one of the most at-risk populations for phone scams, and several new scams have already been reported.

Many scams may claim to be from government agencies or offering free services related to the COVID-19 outbreak, such as free testing. Medicare and Social Security are well-documented stating they do not call members directly. If you feel that you have been exposed to COVID-19 and need to be tested, call your healthcare provider.

“Health care scammers will go to great lengths to steal from Medicare beneficiaries. That’s why guarding your Medicare card and personal information is essential,” said CMS Administrator Seema Verma.

To protect yourself from scammers, it’s important for seniors to remember you will NEVER be asked over the phone for:

* Social Security Number (SSN)
* Medicare Beneficiary Identifier (MBI), commonly called your “Medicare Number”

With such an unprecedented global health event, it is a good time to touch base with your insurance agent. They can help guide you to resources included in your current coverage. You may get calls from people claiming to offer better coverage or more benefits during this time. While these calls can be legitimate, it is important to know who you are talking to.

Any caller should identify themselves and who they represent within the first 30 seconds of the call. If they are offering insurance, they should be willing to share information such as their National Producer Number (NPN) to verify they are a licensed insurance agent.

To stay up to date on specific scam information and releases, please reference: <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/features/scam-alerts>

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