



## OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 4, 2021

### For Information Contact:

Public Affairs (202) 981-6000

### **DHS OIG Participates in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual National “Slam the Scam” Day**

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Inspector General (OIG) joins the Social Security Administration (SSA) OIG and other Federal agencies on March 4, 2021 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual National “Slam the Scam” Day, to raise public awareness of government imposter telephone scams across the United States.

DHS OIG joins SSA OIG in warning all Americans to hang up on all government imposters, and asking them to spread the word to family and friends. These pervasive scams—in which callers pretend to be government employees to mislead victims into providing personal information or making payments—have become a scourge on the American public.

Most recently, scammers, posing as DHS officials, have used Facebook and Instagram accounts in an attempt to swindle money through Cash App and gift cards. The scammers may use one of the following forms of contact:

- Sending a direct message to a victim through Facebook or Instagram to solicit money;
- Posting on a victim’s Facebook timeline to advertise Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) assistance, which includes contact information or a link; or
- Creating “highlights” on an Instagram account homepage, which advertise ways to make money.

In a direct message, the perpetrator indicates that if the victim sends money through Cash App, the victim will receive a substantial dividend in return, e.g., \$10 for \$1500, \$200 for \$5500, or \$650 for \$7000. Variations of the Facebook posts include offering COVID-19 relief assistance via Cash App by paying a grant-processing fee, requesting comments on a Facebook page and then directing the victim to purchase gifts cards to receive a dividend paid by FEMA, and soliciting contributions to fraudulent organizations such as “FEMA World Health.” The Instagram “highlights” connect to sites advertising FEMA assistance and provide instructions on how to send money to receive money in return.



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DHS OIG reminds you this “Slam the Scam” Day that if you are contacted through social media, do not provide any personal information. DHS and FEMA will never contact you using Facebook or Instagram. FEMA does not request grant-processing fees for benefits and will not request that you contribute to causes or charities using gifts cards or CashApp payments. FEMA does not issue dividends. We encourage the public to report these scams to Facebook and Instagram.

DHS OIG takes these matters very seriously. Anyone who believes they may have been a victim of this scam is urged to call the DHS OIG Hotline (1-800-323-8603) or file a complaint online via the DHS OIG website [www.oig.dhs.gov/hotline](http://www.oig.dhs.gov/hotline). By retaining information such as the CashApp account, the Facebook profile, Instagram handle, or email address you were contacted on, you may be able to provide valuable information that could assist DHS OIG to investigate the scam.

For more information regarding SSA OIG’s National “Slam the Scam” day activity you can visit [SSA OIG](#).

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