



Cold Caller Advice Re Coronavirus

The current coronavirus pandemic is presenting us all with new challenges and uncertainty and we will all have our own methods to meet whatever comes our way over the coming weeks.

We are all being inundated with information, so it is important that we only take advice from trusted broadcasters and websites and to follow the guidance of Public Health England, so as to avoid becoming ill ourselves and if we do, to prevent passing it on to others.

Unfortunately, there may be some who will take advantage of the current situation, so we are urging everyone to continue to be vigilant in regards to cold callers both on the phone and at the doorstep.

In particular please be wary of anyone coming door-to-door and offering to do shopping – there are many community groups springing up and most will be genuine, but make sure that you can verify they are legitimate. You should pre-arrange payment directly with the shop and not pay cash or give bank details to the person delivering your shopping.

In these uncertain times it is important to maintain our usual vigilance with cold callers, so please if you are not expecting a caller don't open the door and if you must open the door always use your door chain.

We are also advised that the public and businesses are being increasingly targeted with emails, texts, phone calls and WhatsApp messages offering advice and treatment for the coronavirus, as well as setting up fake websites selling products and offering 'cures' or for donations for victims.

- Be sceptical if you receive an email, text or WhatsApp message about the coronavirus, and never click on attachments or links.
- Never provide personal data such as your full name, your address or date of birth – scammers can use this information to steal your identity.
- Don't be pressured into donating money, and never make donations by cash or gift card, or send money through transfer agents such as Western Union or Moneygram.
- Never give out bank details or PIN numbers to cold callers.
- Don't be pressurised into making a quick decision.

If you think you've been the victim of a scam, then speak to your bank immediately and report any fraud to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040. You can also call the Citizens Advice consumer helpline on 0808 223 1133.