



Department of Justice

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND NON-PROFITS LAUNCH “PREVENT MASS MAILING FRAUD” EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

FACT SHEET

- A consortium of government agencies and non-profit groups led by the Justice Department’s Consumer Protection Branch and Elder Justice Initiative announced a public education campaign to heighten public awareness and educate potential victims and their families about mass mailing fraud schemes.
- Mass mailing fraud has caused hundreds of millions of dollars in loss to older and vulnerable U.S. victims. A coordinated approach both to enforcement and education is the best way to protect older and vulnerable Americans from falling victim to these scams.

Federal Agency Partners

Across the Federal government, agencies have united in their effort to combat financial exploitation of older Americans and to educate them and their caregivers about the need to be vigilant against prize or psychic solicitations being sent to those under their care. Below is the list of agencies and their education programs:

- The Department of Justice has spearheaded this coordinated effort. Through its Consumer Protection Branch and Elder Justice Initiative, the Department will distribute educational materials and host information about mail fraud scams on its websites, www.usdoj.gov/civil/consumer-protection-branch and www.justice.gov/elderjustice/. Point of Contact: Nicole Navas, Nicole.Navas@usdoj.gov, 202-514-1155.
- The U.S. Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) developed an electronic press kit (EPK) to be distributed to multiple media outlets nationwide. The EPK provides readily downloadable content labeled in a manner to make it easier for news outlets to produce their own educational pieces with the materials. Among other things, the EPK will include interviews by law enforcement, victims, and supporting agencies with an interest in fraud prevention. Websites: <http://www.deliveringtrust.com/> & <https://postalinspectors.uspis.gov/>. Point of Contact: ISMediaInquiries@uspis.gov, (202) 268-3700.

- The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) created a mail fraud fact sheet as part of its ongoing “Pass It On” campaign, an initiative that encourages people to share information about frauds that affect older Americans. The FTC will also spread the message through its consumer blog and social media. Anyone who sees mass mailing fraud should file a complaint with the FTC’s Consumer Sentinel database at www.ftc.gov/complaint. Point of Contact: Frank Dorman, FDorman@ftc.gov, (202) 326-2674.
- The U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA) will educate beneficiaries about mass mailing fraud through its network of over 1,200 field offices nationwide. SSA will post educational materials on Social Security Television (SSTV), which can reach millions of viewers annually, and distribute information to thousands of SSA employees who interact with older people daily. The agency will also inform staff in the foreign service posts about the mass mailing fraud. SSA’s Office of the Inspector General will regularly blog about fraud prevention, link people to resources via its social media accounts, and post fraud advisories on its website for identified schemes across the country. Website: www.ssa.gov/antifraudfacts/. Point of Contact: Mark Hinkle, Acting Press Officer; press.office@ssa.gov; 410-965-8904.
- The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) designed and produced a mail fraud alert placemat in coordination with Meals on Wheels America and other meal services to distribute to seniors nationwide. The CFPB’s [*Money Smart for Older Adults*](#) and [*Managing Someone Else’s Money*](#) guides help older adults and their caregivers spot the red flags for mass marketing scams and understand where to go for help. The CFPB also has information online about mail fraud for consumers at [Ask CFPB](#). Point of Contact: David Mayorga, David.Mayorga@cfpb.gov, (202) 435-7170.
- USA.gov, a program of the U.S. General Services Administration’s (GSA) Technology Transformation Service, will include information in its annual Consumer Action Handbook, which provides information to help Americans make informed consumer decisions. [USA.gov](#) will also feature information about mail fraud scams on its website, through subscriber email lists, and on social media. Point of Contact: Victoria Wales, Victoria.Wales@gsa.gov, (202) 394-6261.
- The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission’s Office of Investor Education and Advocacy released an investor alert on advance fee and mass mailing fraud, which will be promoted on [Investor.gov](#), [SEC.gov](#) and social media. Point of Contact: Owen Donley, Donleyo@sec.gov, (202) 551-6322.
- The U.S. Commodities Futures Trading Commission will include an article addressing mass mailing fraud in its SmartCheck monthly newsletter. Additional anti-fraud educational resources can be found at [Fraud Awareness & Prevention](#) and via CFTC’s social media channels on [Facebook](#) and on [Twitter](#). Point of Contact: Lynda F. Williams, Deputy Director, Office of Customer Education and Outreach, lwilliams@cftc.gov, (202) 418-5574.

Non-Profit Organizations

The government has collaborated with non-governmental organizations in the elder justice and consumer protection arena, each of which will contribute to the public education campaign as follows:

- AARP will post information through its Fraud Watch Network, will include information in its newsletter, and will issue a Watchdog Alert to its subscribers. An AARP spokesperson also filmed a segment with the USPIS EPK about AARP's prevention activities and resources. Website: www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork. Point of Contact: Mark Bagley, mbagley@aarp.org, (202) 434-2504.
- Consumers Union, the policy arm of Consumer Reports, is alerting consumers about a variety of elder scams. The Consumer Reports cover story "[Lies, Secrets, and Scams](#)" details how con artists cheat seniors and families out of billions of dollars each year through phony letters and other deceptions. The organization is providing tips to help people build a safety net for themselves and their loved ones. Point of Contact: David Butler, dbutler@consumer.org, (202) 462-6262.
- Consumer Federation of America will be providing information about mass mailing fraud to its members and consumers through its various communication channels. Website: <http://consumerfed.org>. Point of Contact: Susan Grant, sgrant@consumerfed.org, (202) 939-1003.
- Elder Justice Coalition will distribute information about mail fraud scams through social media, on its website, and in its e-newsletter, reaching professionals in prosecutors' offices, adult protective services organizations, and others who work with older adults. It will also send out information through other umbrella organizations, such as the National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs and the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems. Website: www.elderjusticecoalition.com. Point of Contact: Meredith Ponder, meredith@elderjusticecoalition.com, (202) 789-0470.
- Meals on Wheels America will include an article in its monthly e-newsletter and will send information to the Meals on Wheels State Association Presidents to share broadly with their respective memberships. It will also help facilitate the distribution of the mail fraud alert placemat it developed collaboratively with the CFPB to seniors nationwide. It will share information through social media outlets and will include it in the National Resource Center on Nutrition and Aging's online resource library and listserv. Website: www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org. Point of Contact: Jenny Bertolette, jenny@mealsonwheelsamerica.org, (571) 339-1603.
- The National Adult Protective Services Association will post information on its website and social media pages and will distribute the message through its listserv, reaching

nearly 1,000 professionals who serve older adults. Website: www.napsa-now.org. Point of Contact: Trudy Gregorie, trudy.gregorie@napsa-now.org, (202) 866-0505.

- The National Association of Area Agencies on Aging will draft an article for its weekly e-newsletter, which reaches approximately 1,200 directors and senior staff of Area Agencies on Aging and Title VI Native American Aging Programs around the country. It will also share information through its social media pages and the Eldercare Locator. Point of Contact: Amy Gotwals, agotwals@n4a.org, (202) 872-0888.
- The National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities will distribute educational information through its weekly newsletter and social media channels. Website: www.nasuad.org. Point of Contact: Rachel Feldman, RFeldman@nasuad.org, (202) 898-2578.
- The National Center for Victims of Crime will distribute materials through its networks and in financial fraud trainings, and will link information to the VictimConnect Resource Center, a resource for crime victims to learn about their rights and options through telephone-based and online helplines, and through service referrals. Anyone seeking NCVC's services should call or text: 1-855-4-VICTIM [1-855-484-2846] or connect via its website and chat: <http://victimconnect.org>. Point of Contact: Tara Ballesteros, TBallesteros@ncvc.org, (202) 467-8743.
- The National Consumers League is promoting consumer awareness and fraud prevention through its social media channels and through a Fraud Alert. Website: www.Fraud.org. Point of Contact: John Breyault, johnb@nclnet.org, (202) 835-3323.