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Consumer Alert: How to Avoid Summer Scams

(Montgomery) – Summer is heating up, but so are the number of scam calls targeting you and your loved ones in an attempt to steal your identity and your hard-earned money. Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall is urging Alabamians to be vigilant when unknown numbers call asking for personal information. Whether it is someone demanding a payment for Social Security fines or fees, personal Medicaid information, or falsely claiming to be a grandchild in need of financial assistance, these con artists target our most vulnerable, especially elderly citizens.

“This week, my office stopped a \$60,000 cashier’s check from being delivered to an unscrupulous character using the Social Security scam to demand immediate payment or the victim’s participation in the Social Security program would be cancelled,” said Attorney General Steve Marshall. “As scam artists adapt schemes and tactics, I urge anyone receiving unsolicited calls demanding money or wire transfers to stop, hang up the phone, and immediately contact the authorities. State and federal agencies will not demand your social security number or payments in order to participate in most programs.”

Attorney General Marshall recommends the following strategies to avoid falling victim to many of the common scams:

- Do not react to pressure from the caller to take immediate action.
- Ask the caller for their name, and if they will not provide it immediately, hang up the phone.
- Never send a check or wire money to someone who makes an unsolicited call.
- Refuse to send any funds to an unknown account or entity.
- Never pay with a gift card. No legitimate caller will ask you to pay a bill or fee with a gift card.
- Sign up for the Do Not Call registry at donotcall.gov or call 888-382-1222 from the phone number you want to add to the registry.

To report fraud, contact the Federal Trade Commission at ReportFraud.ftc.gov or call 877-FTC-HELP (877-382-4357).

For more information or to report a scam, call the Alabama Attorney General’s Office at (334) 242-7300 or visit AlabamaAG.gov.



