

**Investor.gov****U.S. SECURITIES AND
EXCHANGE COMMISSION**

Frauds Targeting Main Street Investors -- Investor Alert

April 10, 2020

The SEC's Office of Investor Education and Advocacy (OIEA) and Retail Strategy Task Force are issuing this Alert to educate Main Street investors about current investment frauds, including scams related to the [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#).

Fraudsters often seek to use national crises and periods of uncertainty to lure investors into scams. They may play off investors' hopes and fears, as well as their charity and kindness, and may try to exploit confusion or rumors in the marketplace.

Like the rest of the SEC, the Division of Enforcement continues to execute on its mission of protecting investors and remains fully operational. The agency is actively monitoring our markets for frauds, illicit schemes and other misconduct affecting U.S. investors relating to COVID-19—and as circumstances warrant, will issue trading suspensions and use enforcement tools as appropriate. Still, we urge you not to let your guard down when it comes to spotting fraudulent investment schemes—including those masquerading as charities or targeting specific groups of people. Below are a few frauds Main Street investors should be especially wary of during this time.

You can also help others by [reporting](#) possible securities fraud to the SEC. We strongly encourage anyone who becomes aware of possible securities fraud to report the activity using the SEC's online tip, complaint, and referral (TCR) system at <https://www.sec.gov/tcr>.

Protect Yourself from Investment Fraud Relating to COVID-19.

As you navigate the COVID-19 pandemic, don't overlook the importance of protecting yourself and others from investment scams. Many investment frauds involve unlicensed individuals or unregistered firms, so verify that the seller is currently registered or licensed using the free and simple search tools on [Investor.gov](#). Also, look out for promises of guaranteed high investment returns and unsolicited investment offers. Learn more about these red flags and others at the Investor.gov webpage [How to Avoid Fraud](#).

Fraudulent Stock Promotions and Market Manipulation

Fraudulent Unregistered Offerings

Charitable Investment Scams

Community-Based Financial Frauds

Bogus CDs Offering High Returns

Additional Resources

The [U.S. Department of the Treasury](#) issued an alert regarding possible scams involving claims of COVID-19 related grants or stimulus payments.

[Look Out for Coronavirus-Related Investment Scams - Investor Alert](#)

[Investor Alert: Have Something in Common with Someone Selling an Investment? It May Make You a Target for Fraud](#)

Call OIEA at 1-800-732-0330, ask a question [using this online form](#), or email us at Help@SEC.gov.

Visit [Investor.gov](#), the SEC's website for individual investors.

[Report](#) possible securities fraud to the SEC.

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