

Warning: Don't fall for this new Social Security phone scam



Theo Thimou, <https://clark.com/scams>

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The Social Security Administration (SSA) has a [warning about a new scam](#) involving a number showing up on your caller ID that appears to be from the SSA, but is really from criminals intent on stealing your info.

Social Security phone scam reported across the country

This particular scam involves criminals using a technique called “spoofing” to make an incoming call appear as if it’s coming from a number which it’s really not.

In this case, scamsters are making the SSA’s legitimate customer service number — 1-800-772-1213 — show up on the caller ID.

If you answer the incoming call, the person on the other end of the line claims that they’re an SSA employee and need personal info, including your Social Security number, to round out your file.

Another variation on this theme is you’re told that the SSA wants to increase your benefit payment, but need additional info to do so. A third variant involves a threat of stopping your Social Security benefits if you don’t hand over your info.

People are reporting this scam from all corners of the country, the SSA notes.

Here’s the reality...

The SSA will generally not contact you by phone for customer service issues.

However, in the unlikely event they do, it is possible that “an SSA employee may request the citizen confirm personal information over the phone,” the agency notes.

But what they won’t do is “threaten you for information or promise a Social Security benefit approval or increase in exchange for information.”

Here’s the bottom-line: You should never give your Social Security number, bank account info or other sensitive financial data to anyone making an unsolicited call to your home. Because the threat of caller ID spoofing is real.

If you get a phone call from someone claiming to be from the SSA and you aren’t sure if it’s a scam or not, hang up the phone immediately.

Then call the agency back at [what you know to be a legitimate number](#) — 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) — to find out what they wanted.

You can also call our [Consumer Action Center](#) at 404-892-8227 for free off-air advice about how to handle these calls. We've seen an uptick in the number of questions about this particular scam and our volunteers are standing by and ready to help you spot the ripoff!

Finally, you should also go one step further and report any suspicious calls to the SSA's Office of the Inspector General at 1-800-269-0271 or [online](#).

About the author: [Theo Thimou](#)

Theo has co-written several books with Clark Howard, including the New York Times #1 bestseller *Living Large in Lean Times*. As a single widowed parent of two young children, he strives to bring unique savings tips to men and women like him who must face life without their spouses. He can be reached at theo@clark.com.