SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS SCAM TARGETS SENIORS

The Office of the Illinois Attorney General and the Social Security Administration (SSA) are warning seniors about a new scam to steal Social Security benefits.

THE SCAM

Identity thieves are fraudulently re-routing Social Security benefits to their own bank accounts and prepaid debit cards. The identity thieves get their hands on your personal information by posing as Social Security Administration employees or health care providers working to make sure their records are accurate. The scammers call, email or send a letter asking for personal data such as your:

- Social Security number
- Birth date
- Mother's maiden name
- Bank account information

This information can then be used to steal your identity and your money. After obtaining the information, the scammers contact the Social Security Administration and request that your payments be rerouted to their accounts.

HOW TO AVOID BECOMING A TARGET

Never provide your Social Security number, bank account information or other personal information over the telephone or to someone you have just met unless you initiated the call or contact.

Remember, a Social Security representative or health care provider will not contact you by email, but **may reply to you** by phone or letter if you've applied for benefits or medical services.

WHEN IN DOUBT…CHECK IT OUT

Before providing any information regarding your Social Security number, call the Social Security Administration directly at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY: 1-800-325-0778) or visit your local SSA office to verify the request.

If you have been the victim of identity theft, contact the Illinois Attorney General's Identity Theft Hotline at 1-866-999-5630 (TTY: 1-877-844-5461).

LISA MADIGAN
ILLINOIS ATTORNEY GENERAL