

**Recent Communication from FBI to local Law Enforcement  
shared by YCCD Police Chief Adam Pharris**

The FBI is in regular contact with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Office of Personnel Management, and other federal agencies tracking the spread of COVID-19 and is taking a comprehensive approach to prepare for a variety of scenarios. In support of our mission, we are enacting measures to protect the FBI workforce, including heightened hygiene practices, social distancing options, telework and flexible work schedules where appropriate and authorizing only essential operational travel until further notice.

During times of crisis, criminals exploit the vulnerabilities of the people we serve. We want to ensure you have the information you need to guard against criminal activity. The FBI has established a web page, <https://www.fbi.gov/coronavirus>, as a resource to help educate and inform the communities we serve.

We remind you to continue exercising smart cyber hygiene in this uncertain time. Be aware that cyber criminals may exploit concerns surrounding COVID-19 to perpetuate scams designed to steal your money. The FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) has published a PSA offering information about fraud schemes related to the COVID-19 pandemic: <https://www.ic3.gov/media/2020/200320.aspx>. Please remember the following four tips to protect yourself and help stop this criminal activity:

- Do not open attachments or click links within emails from senders you don't recognize
- Always verify the information being shared originates from a legitimate source
- Do not provide your logins, financial data or other personal information in response to an email
- Visit websites by manually inputting their domains to your browser.

Due to suspension or cancellation of classes, many children are now spending more time on internet-connected devices. This can expose our children to criminals who exploit the anonymity of internet-based communication. Measures to prevent child exploitation and the signs of abuse are found on the following FBI web page: <https://www.fbi.gov/news/pressrel/press-releases/school-closings-due-to-covid-19-present-potential-for-increased-risk-of-child-exploitation>

Fraud is a perpetual concern for the FBI but criminals often leverage the opportunities crises present to take advantage of the concerns and fears of our citizens. The FBI has already seen investment schemes tied to alleged COVID-19 cures, fraudulent products, and charitable donation scams. Always do significant research to ensure charities are legitimate, ensure contact information or web addresses you are receiving are accurate, and steer clear of investment schemes that claim a high rate of return during these challenging times.

We are also concerned about potential hate crimes arising during the national emergency. Hate crime is a traditional offense such as murder, arson, or vandalism with an added element of bias against a race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, or gender identity. Hate itself is offensive but not a federal crime—and the FBI is mindful of protecting freedom of speech and other civil liberties. The FBI remains vigilant against use of the national emergency to motivate or inspire hate crimes committed against any group.

You are a vital component to crime prevention and law enforcement in your community. Please report criminal activity and threats to public safety to the CCIC or FBI. To submit a tip to the CCIC go to [www.sacrtac.org](http://www.sacrtac.org). To submit a tip to the FBI call (916) 746-7000 or submit a tip to [tips.fbi.gov](http://tips.fbi.gov). COVID-related fraud should be reported to the [National Center for Disaster Fraud](http://NationalCenterforDisasterFraud.gov) Hotline at 866-720-5721 or via email at [disaster@leo.gov](mailto:disaster@leo.gov). If the criminal activity is cyber related, you may also submit a report to the FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center at [www.ic3.gov](http://www.ic3.gov).