Privacy Tip #232 – Spam Phone Calls Rampant for Remote Workers

Robinson & Cole
Article By
Linn F. Freedman
Robinson & Cole LLP
Data Privacy + Security Insider

- Communications, Media & Internet
- Coronavirus News
- All Federal

Thursday, March 26, 2020

For those of us who work outside of the home during normal times, we know when we are home on the weekends not to answer our home telephone unless we recognize the number or caller. The same is, of course, true for our mobile phones. If the caller is someone we know, they will leave a message and we can call them back. If it’s a scammer or robocall, we ignore it.

But now that we are working at home, people are more susceptible to answering the phone even when they don’t recognize the number, because it might be a co-worker or colleague who is trying to get in touch with us. We used to issue warnings about telephone scams to our senior citizens who were home during the day and vulnerable; now we also need to warn workers who are working at home during this pandemic.

Telephone scams are on the rise during this pandemic. Scammers know that everyone is working at home and the robocalls, solicitations, and promises are non-stop. Just like on the weekends, they must be ignored. The scammers are using the fear of COVID-19 to impersonate the Centers for Disease Control, the Social Security Administration, Department of Labor (regarding possible unemployment benefits), and even promising to hand deliver the check from Congress if you provide your personal information to verify your identity. This includes your Social Security number to make sure you are who you say you are.

This week, a fraud scheme promised home delivery of a coronavirus vaccine if you provided personal information and payment over the phone. There is no such vaccine. But people are so scared, they are falling for these scams.
During this stressful time, fraudsters are betting on the fact that fear will make otherwise cautious people do things they wouldn’t normally do. Don’t be one of those people. Understand that phone scams are on the rise, stay vigilant, and ignore those calls.

Copyright © 2020 Robinson & Cole LLP. All rights reserved.