



County of San Bernardino
Department of Aging and Adult Services
(DAAS)

SCAM ALERT

Scam: Vexing Texts

Target: All Seniors

Criminals are using text messages to advise people that they have been selected to win a “free gift card” simply by entering a code at a particular website. If individuals follow these instructions, they will end up on a website that requires them to give personal information and sign up for numerous risky trial offers in order to claim the “free gift card”. Hold the phone! **This is a scam known as a vexing text!**

Scam artists are offering free gift cards via text messages to encourage seniors to disclose personal information and accept risky trial offers!

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) recommends you follow these steps to protect yourself if you receive a vexing text as described above:

- **Delete any text messages that ask you to confirm or provide personal information.** Legitimate companies don't ask for personal information by text or email.
- **Never reply or click on the links provided in the message.** Links can install malware and take you to sites that look real but whose purpose is to steal your information.
- **Never provide personal information in response to a text.** A scam artist may want access to your personal information to open fraudulent new accounts in your name.
- **Report vexing texts to your cell phone carrier,** AT&T, T-Mobile, Verizon, Sprint or Bell customers can forward the vexing text to 7726 (spam) free of charge.
- **Review your cell phone bill for unauthorized charges** and report them to your cell phone carrier.

**If you think you may be a victim of a scam, contact
San Bernardino County Adult Protective Services (APS)
at 877-565-2020, or your local police department.**