



Herb B. Kuhn
President and CEO
P.O. Box 60
Jefferson City, MO 65102

September 1, 2020

The Honorable Eric Schmitt
Missouri State Attorney General
Missouri Attorney General's Office
Supreme Court Building
P.O. Box 899
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0899

Dear Mr. Attorney General:

News sources are reporting a rash of contact tracing scams associated with COVID-19 in which individuals posing as health department officials try to obtain financial or other personal information from unsuspecting citizens. The scammers claim they are a contact tracer and inform the individual they have been in close contact with someone infected with COVID-19. The caller then asks for payment to continue the process or for the individual's social security number for identification purposes. We understand some of these scams are occurring via email as well, with malicious links contained in the message. Local public health departments may contact individuals by text message, but are less likely to conduct contact tracing via email.

As of this writing, we have not detected any scammer activity in Missouri, but we want to be prepared. In this regard, I wanted to make you aware of these activities so that you can take steps to protect the public from harm by bad actors willing to take advantage of individuals' fear of contracting COVID-19. At the same time, it is important that citizens respond to genuine contact tracing efforts. State and local public health officials will never ask for financial or confidential identifying information, such as a social security number.

As the state's most trusted consumer advocate, your office is in the position to disseminate this message to Missourians. Should you have questions about these recent scams or wish to coordinate the messaging of any advisory, please do not hesitate to contact me at 893-3700, ext. 1332 or via email at hkuhn@mhanet.com. Thank you in advance for your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Herb B. Kuhn", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Herb B. Kuhn
President and CEO

hbk:jd/ds