



OHIO CREDIT
UNION LEAGUE

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Consumer alerts abound around coronavirus

Ohioans are encouraged to beware of coronavirus scams.

COLUMBUS – Unfortunately, Ohioans need to protect more than their health amid the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) nationally. As financial cooperatives that put people first, Ohio credit unions are encouraging their communities to follow the advice of recent consumer alerts and protect their finances and personal information as scammers worldwide look to exploit consumer fears and generosity surrounding the outbreak.

The [Federal Trade Commission](#) (FTC) has compiled tips for dealing with recent and emerging scams, including:

- Avoid phishing scams by keeping your anti-malware and anti-virus software up to date on your computer and never click on links from sources you don't know.
- Go directly to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) and the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO) for the most recent information on the coronavirus, rather than obtaining information from emails and other sources that may not be legitimate.
- Watch out for advertisements or “investment opportunities” around coronavirus prevention, treatment, or cures. Consult a medical professional for questions about prevention and treatment.

FTC [consumer alerts](#) are available to share information on the latest scams, and consumers are asked to report suspicious claims to the FTC at [ftc.gov/complaint](https://www.ftc.gov/complaint).

Additionally, the [BBB Wise Giving Alliance](#) finds that when natural disaster or tragedy occurs, generous donors are quick to assist charities that are providing help. Unfortunately, scammers also use this as an opportunity for exploitation. Contributors are encouraged to do their research, and the BBB Wise Giving Alliance suggests the following tips to ensure wise giving decisions to charities address the coronavirus outbreak:

- Consider experienced relief organizations that are better equipped than new charities to fulfill relief promises and deliver aid.
- Visit [Give.org](https://www.give.org) to verify soliciting organizations.

- Understand crowdfunding and review sites for information about fees, how quickly funds will be dispersed and other important details.

The [Ohio Department of Health](#) and [local health districts](#) are also great resources for coronavirus updates at the city, county and state level. As Ohioans take steps to prepare for and limit the spread of coronavirus, it's important to use the same caution when obtaining information about the virus and responding to the needs that arise in order to provide relief and assistance during the outbreak.

Credit unions exist to improve their members' lives and can be a great partner for financial wellness and education. Most Ohioans are eligible to join and enjoy the benefits. To find a credit union or learn more, visit yourmoneyfurther.com.

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The Ohio Credit Union League, with offices in Columbus, is a state trade association representing 257 credit unions. Credit unions are not-for-profit financial institutions owned and democratically controlled by their members. Ohio credit unions provide savings, loans, and other consumer financial services to more than 3 million members.