



## CYBER SITUATIONAL AWARENESS REPORT

### Overview

The South Carolina Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity (SC CIC) Program has been working with federal, state, and local agencies, as well as South Carolina businesses, across the state to remain aware of the cyber threats our citizens are facing each day.

As COVID-19 continues to affect our communities, cyber criminals have adjusted their tactics to take advantage of this time of uncertainty and fear. Currently, the most common form of cyber threat is e-mail scams, especially ones tailored to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The e-mail scam pictured here is referred to as phishing and is intended to exploit the anticipation associated with receiving an economic impact payment.

### Sample of Actual E-mail Scam

**From:** IRS Online Services <[info@kagaku.com](mailto:info@kagaku.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 13, 2020 10:23 AM  
**To:** ~~xxxxxx@irs.gov~~  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Identity Verification

Sender's e-mail address does NOT match the expected irs.gov format

**EXTERNAL EMAIL:** Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.



The IRS is committed to helping you get your Economic Impact Payment as soon as possible.

The payments, also referred to by some as stimulus payments, are automatic for most taxpayers.

No further action is needed by taxpayers who filed tax returns in 2018 and 2019 and most seniors and retirees.

Follow the reference below to verify your identity.

<https://sa.www4.irs.gov/irfof-efp/start.do>

Link format is irregular, and it shows a different link when you hold your cursor over it

This information is use for identity verification purposes only.

Internal Revenue Service

**EXTERNAL EMAIL:** Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Phishing e-mails attempt to trick the user into divulging private information by opening links, images, or other attachments for malicious purposes. The links may open a webpage that want you to sign into a site with a username and password. The attachment may appear innocuous but actually contain malware that infects your device. Please be wary of any attempts to get your personal or financial information by phone, e-mail, text or social media

from a person or company you don't already know. If it is from a person or company you know, verify through a different source. Review trusted information from official sites like the ones mentioned below. For example, the IRS has stated they **are not** "going to call you asking to verify or provide your financial information so you can get an economic impact payment or your refund faster. That also applies to surprise emails that appear to be coming from the IRS. Remember, don't open them or click on attachments or links. Go to IRS.gov for the most up-to-date information."

### Conclusion and Assessment

SC CIC continues to review the cyber risks and threats constantly changing in today's connected world. The current cyber threat landscape demonstrates a **CRITICALLY ELEVATED RISK**, where we must all remain vigilant. Please know that SC CIC and our partners are all working together to continue to protect our state and its citizens.

### Reporting Cyber Scams

If you need assistance, have more questions about these scams, or need to report a different type of scam, please visit the following sites:

For information about COVID-19 related tax relief and payments, visit [www.irs.gov/coronavirus-tax-relief-and-economic-impact-payments](https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus-tax-relief-and-economic-impact-payments).

For reporting tax-related scams, email [phishing@irs.gov](mailto:phishing@irs.gov).

For reporting all other cyber scams, visit [www.ftc.gov/complaint](https://www.ftc.gov/complaint).

For more information on COVID-19, visit [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus) or [www.coronavirus.gov](https://www.coronavirus.gov).

For information on how South Carolina is recovering, visit [www.accelerate.sc.gov](https://www.accelerate.sc.gov).