

RAYMOND JAMES®



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Dear Friends,

Months into the coronavirus pandemic, there has been a disturbing increase in scam-related activity affecting clients of all ages. In fact, coronavirus-related attacks increased by more than 600% in February and March alone.

As we continue to observe physical distancing recommendations to safeguard our health and mitigate the spread of COVID-19, the respiratory illness caused by the coronavirus, an unfortunate consequence is that people are more isolated. And scammers will look to take advantage of that isolation and loneliness.

With the help of the home-office team at Raymond James, we want to share with you some tips to help protect yourself and others from fraudsters during these especially challenging times. Here is some good advice to keep in mind:

- **Isolation tactics:** Studies show elder fraud is more likely to occur when an older individual is isolated or the guardian is absent. Fraudsters will try to take advantage of the loneliness people are feeling. It's important to check on loved ones more often than usual – the more the better – to pick up on their cues. If that's hard to do by phone, try to set up a video chat.
- **Know when it's too good to be true:** If something seems too good to be true – it likely is. A package of 1,000 surgical masks marked down from \$199 to \$14.95? As much as we all love a bargain, if something seems too good to be true, it may be a ploy to get your personal or financial information.
- **Common scams with a COVID-19 twist:** A fraudster will try to create a sense of urgency or fear. Common storylines involve someone you know or love having been in an accident or arrested. During the pandemic, storylines have been altered to include someone in need of money because they are trapped in a quarantined location, unable to travel.

We work diligently each day to ensure your best interests are top of mind and your personal information is kept safe. If you'd like more information about how to protect yourself from scams, please feel free to reach out. We're here to help.

Sincerely,

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