



Secretary Of State Jesse White Warns Residents To Be Aware Of Two Scams Targeting Illinoisans

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Secretary of State Jesse White is warning Illinois residents to be on alert for a pair of scams seeking to defraud Illinoisans.

“I have zero tolerance for fraudsters who prey on people in desperate times,” said White. “My office is working with the Illinois Attorney General’s office to protect Illinoisans from falling victim to these fraudulent schemes. In addition, we have notified the Federal Trade Commission and the FBI.”

In the first scam, White is warning the public of scammers who are sending unsolicited text messages, claiming to be from the Illinois Secretary of State. The text messages contain vague references to “Problems with your information” and another reference to “*IL* Secretary of State.” Each text also contains a link attributed to “uipendingcases.org.”

White says the text is a scam and recipients should not click on the link or provide any information. Visiting the website could place malware on the recipients’ devices or trick them into disclosing sensitive personal information. The Secretary of State’s office never requests personal information, like a Social Security number, via text message.

“Delete the text,” said White. “Do not click on it and do not provide any of your personal information.”

In the second scam, fraudulent websites are offering online vehicle registration renewals for license plate stickers and then charging residents an additional fee for the registration.

White warns Illinoisans that one particular website — IllinoisCarReg.com, is misleading customers with an unauthorized website promoting online license plate sticker renewals.

Once the customer provides personal information, the sham company charges the customer a fee of \$39.99, in addition to the sticker fee. This company, which has websites for multiple states, is misleading residents across the nation. The Federal Trade Commission is investigating the company in an effort to shut it down over concerns of how the company may be using the personal data that it obtains from customers.

White strongly urges Illinois residents who wish to renew their license plate stickers to make sure they are visiting "<http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com>" before proceeding to renew their stickers online. The process is simple and easy. Residents need their registration ID and PIN, which are located on the renewal notice and registration card — which most people keep in their vehicle's glove compartment. Vehicle owners may then visit "<http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com>" and click on "License Plates Renewal" under Online Services.

White underscored that Illinoisans should pay close attention to the websites they access as many of them — including IllinoisCarReg.com — note in fine print that they are not a government website.

"Before you conduct your business with the Secretary of State's office online, double-check you are on our official government website, "<http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com>," said White.

White encourages people to take steps to protect their personal information:

Delete emails and texts that promise or offer access to driver's licenses or state ID cards, and do not click on any links contained in such emails or text messages, as they may place malware on your devices.

Hang up on any calls, including robocalls, which direct you to take immediate action or provide personally identifiable information, such as your Social Security number or bank account number.

Ask to use other types of identifiers besides your Social Security number.

Keep your software up-to-date, including your phone and computer operating systems and antivirus protection programs. Most phones, computers and antivirus software can be set to update automatically when new software versions are released.

Individuals who feel they have been defrauded by this scheme are encouraged to contact their credit card company to dispute the extra fee charge. If you have questions about text message scams or identity theft, call the Illinois Attorney General's Consumer Fraud Hotline at 800-386-5438 (Chicago), 800-243-0618 (Springfield) or 800-243-0607 (Carbondale).

“My office will continue working closely with the Illinois Attorney General’s office, and the appropriate federal entities, to protect Illinoisans from falling victim to these fraudulent schemes,” said White.