



# Hays County, Texas

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## Information for the News Media

March 23, 2020

### **Be Aware of Price-Gouging, Scams, during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic**

**Hays County Courthouse, San Marcos, TX** (March 23, 2020) – The Texas Attorney General’s Office is on the lookout for price-gouging and the Federal Trade Commission wants to help you make the wise choice when people call, text, or email you with offers of money from the government or an agency.

There are many scams already being reported in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic. While governments have discussed offering compensation to those affected, there are no government programs currently in effect. Anyone who tells you they can get you the money now is a scammer.

As always, don’t click on links or attachments in emails or texts unless you are certain that they are from a valid source and you are expecting that email. Many scam emails look very much like those from legitimate people and businesses. There is one scam email going around right now that pretends to be from WHO (the World Health Organization). It is from a scam operation that wants your money and personal information.

Remember that the government will never ask you for fees upfront, nor for your credit/debit card, bank account number, gift cards, or Social Security Number. Be aware of scams offering coronavirus advice. The best current preventions of social distancing, frequent cleaning, and proper hand-washing, etc., have been widely disseminated, and there are no cures, vaccinations, or other credible preventions available at this time.

More information on scams and how to spot them is at <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog/2020/03/checks-government>

*(continued)*

Price gouging is selling or leasing necessary items at an exorbitant or excessive price. Some examples include fuel, food, medicine, lodging, building materials, construction tools, etc.

Visit <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/consumer-protection/disaster-and-emergency-scams/how-spot-and-report-price-gouging> to learn all the details or make a report of price gouging, or call 1-800-621-0508 to report it.

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