

Tel: 01296 388788
Email: trading_standards@surreycc.gov.uk
General Enquiries: 0300 123 2329
www.bucksandsurreytradingstandards.gov.uk

TRADING STANDARDS

County Hall, Aylesbury,
Buckinghamshire HP20 1UP

Consort House, 5-7
Queensway,
Redhill, Surrey RH1 1YB

Your Ref:

Our Ref:

We are writing to you today with regards the Coronavirus and how you can access support and safeguard yourself against scams.

Firstly, we hope that you are well and that we would like to re-iterate the government message to STAY AT HOME, reduce non-essential contact and to follow NHS guidelines about maintaining good hygiene.

If you have either:

- A high temperature – you feel hot to touch on your chest or back
- A new continuous cough – this means you've started coughing repeatedly

you must self-isolate for seven days if you live alone, or fourteen days if you live with others.

It is particularly important for people who are over 70 or have an underlying health condition.

Things such as Facebook Community Groups, WhatsApp Groups and the Nextdoor App that sends neighbourhood alerts can be great ways of staying in touch with those around you however it can be difficult to know who to trust. These are all online and not everyone has access to the Internet, so please see the telephone numbers below for your County if you require assistance.

Please be aware that not everyone out there is trustworthy and some people will take advantage of this unusual situation our society is facing.

Here are just some of the scams we are aware of, but please note that fraudsters come in all shapes and sizes and can contact you at the door, by phone, post or online.

- Be aware of people offering miracle cures for coronavirus – there is no specific treatment for coronavirus (COVID-19). Treatment aims to relieve the symptoms until you recover
- The council DO NOT need to enter your house to do a deep clean
- Bogus healthcare workers claiming to be offering 'home-testing' for coronavirus – this is a scam and these kits are not currently available to buy.
- Emails saying that you can get a refund on taxes, utilities or similar are usually bogus and they are just after your personal and bank details.
- There are lots of fake products available to buy online that say they can protect you or cure coronavirus. These will not help and are designed to just take your money
- There are new mobile phone apps that claim to give you updates on the virus, instead they lock your phone and demand a ransom
- Your bank or the police will NEVER ask for your bank details over the phone
- People offering to do your shopping and ask for money upfront and then disappear

Tips to avoid getting tricked out of your money:-

- Be sceptical, don't be afraid to hang up, bin it, delete it or shut the door
- Take your time, don't be rushed
- If you are online, be aware of Fake news and use trusted sources such as .gov.uk or NHS.uk
- Know who you're dealing with, if you need help talk to someone you know or get in touch with your local Council on the numbers below
- Protect your financial information, especially from people you don't know. Do NOT give your bank card or PIN to a stranger
- If you think you have been scammed then call the police on 101 (999 only in an emergency)
- For further consumer advice or to report to Trading Standards please contact us directly on 01296 388788 or email trading.standards@surreycc.gov.uk.

If you live in Surrey:

There is a new community helpline to help direct residents who need support, such as picking up shopping, prescription collections or having someone who can be a telephone friend, to services who can help.

Community Helpline number: 0300 200 1008 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/emergency-planning-and-community-safety/coronavirus>

If you live in Buckinghamshire:

If you are an elderly or vulnerable person who is struggling to self-isolate please call the council on 01296 383 204.

<https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/community-and-safety/coronavirus/>

Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lee Ormandy', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lee Ormandy

Trading Standards Manager