

Government Grants

The BBB warns consumers to be aware of unscrupulous groups or individuals targeting consumers by phone or mail informing them that they qualify for a government grant. Some consumers have also received email communications making similar claims.

Consumers are informed that in order to qualify for the grant, they must provide private information such as their checking account number or social security number. In some instances, the scam artist already has the victim's basic information or the bank routing number, or numerical address for the consumer's bank (available from public records).

Consumers are told that a one-time processing fee is required in the form of either a money gram or direct wire through Western Union. Consumers are promised that after the processing fee is received, the money from the grant will be directly deposited in their account or sent to them in the form of a check.

The BBB along with the Federal Trade Commission and Attorney General's Office warn consumers to NOT give out any personal information such as bank account numbers, social security numbers, or credit card numbers to such individuals.

Consumers should understand that a real government agency will NOT ask for payment of a processing fee for a grant. Remember, just because the caller/ mailing states they are from a federal agency does NOT mean that it is legitimate.

The names of several government agencies that award grants are also available at any public library at no charge. The only official agency for all federal grant-making agencies is the Government Grants Management Office. For information on how to FIND and APPLY for legitimate federal government grants, consumers can contact:

Government Grants Management Office
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
HHH Building
Washington, DC 20201
(800)518-4726
Web: www.grants.gov (All forms are available on website)
Email: support@grants.gov

(Source: Consumer Affairs & Government Grants Office)