

PRESS



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For Immediate Release  
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\*\*\*\*\**CONSUMER ALERT*\*\*\*\*\**CONSUMER ALERT*\*\*\*\*\*

**MADIGAN WARNS MEDICARE BENEFICIARIES: BEWARE OF REQUESTS FOR PERSONAL FINANCIAL AND MEDICAL INFORMATION RELATED TO THE NEW MEDICARE PART D PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT**

Chicago -- Attorney General Lisa Madigan today warned Medicare beneficiaries that seniors have recently reported receiving calls from alleged insurance agents offering assistance with the new Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Benefit.

The caller reportedly has asked for the seniors' bank account numbers, the amounts in their accounts, the prescription drugs they take and where their safe deposit box key is located.

Madigan said such calls are fraudulent attempts to obtain personal information that could be used to financially exploit Medicare beneficiaries. She reminded Medicare beneficiaries never to give out personal financial information over the phone when faced with unsolicited requests and advised that the best thing to do is simply hang up the phone.

Beginning this month and continuing through August, the Social Security Administration will mail application forms to those Medicare beneficiaries they believe will qualify for low income assistance. Almost half of all Medicare beneficiaries will receive these applications. The Social Security Administration applications do not ask for specific bank account numbers, but may ask for general financial information.

It is important for Medicare beneficiaries to pay close attention to mail from the Social Security Administration and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) during this period when the new Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Benefit is being implemented.

Madigan advised that if consumers are concerned about the legitimacy of a solicitation related to the new Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Benefit, or have any questions about the new benefit, they should contact the Illinois Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP) at 1-800-548-9034 or the Illinois Department on Aging Senior HelpLine at 1-800-252-8966.