



Hello!

Scams, scams, scams...everywhere you go. How many of us are getting calls about our car warranties, or email notices from banks saying there is a problem with our account? Any romance scams coming your way? And the never-ending [Grandparent Scam](#)? So many fraudsters trying to get our personal information, seems like they never end. The same holds true for Medicare Fraud, many times it is an old fraud with a new twist, how many Medicare Card Scams are there? Unfortunately, too many, and many Medicare beneficiaries continue to fall victim to these scams every day.

On Friday February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021, we will hear from Robin Eichen, a Senior Attorney at the Federal Trade Commission. Robin will join us at our regularly scheduled SMP Volunteer meeting, to discuss some of the latest scams and the role of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). Please join us for this very informative presentation!

And as always, **THANK YOU** for all you do to keep your communities informed of the latest scams, your hard work and dedication are appreciated more than you know!

Beth Nelson  
Director NYS SMP

## VOLUNTEERS

Make a difference in your community—Hear from **SMP Volunteer Vanessa Birmingham**

## REMINDERS



Join us for the February SMP Volunteer Meeting on FEB. 19th, 11:00 AM

- To join by computer Click [HERE](#).
- To join by phone dial 646-558-8656, Meeting ID: 828 6128 5751#
- If you would like to view past issues of our SMP Monthly, Click [HERE](#).



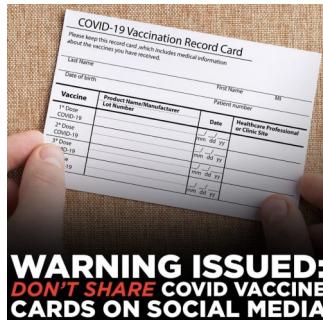
**Please wash your hands, wear a mask, social distance and avoid small and large gatherings.**

## Additional information to help you avoid a vaccine-related scam.

Please share with your friends, family and others in your community:

- Don't share a photo of your vaccination card on social media. The self-identifying information on it makes you vulnerable to identity theft and can help scammers create phony versions. (bbb.org)
- **Don't pay to sign up for the vaccine.** Anyone who asks for a payment to put you on a list, make an appointment for you, or reserve a spot in line is a scammer. The COVID-19 vaccine itself is free for everyone.
- **Ignore sales ads for the vaccine.** You can't buy it – anywhere. The vaccine is only available at federal & state-approved locations.
- **Watch for unexpected or unusual texts.** If your health care provider or pharmacist has used text messages to contact you in the past, you might get a text from them about the vaccine. If you get a text, call your health care provider or pharmacist directly to make sure they sent the text.

The **NYS Senior Medicare Patrol** can help if you have questions or concerns about COVID-19 Fraud and Vaccine Scams. **Call 800-333-4374.**



## Meet SMP Volunteer Vanessa Birmingham

I am a lifelong resident of Buffalo, NY and a proud mom of five children, grandmother of six & great grandmother of one!

I am a member of Macedonia Baptist Church, where I serve as the Vice President for the Mother's Board, a prayer warrior, and a Christian educator. I am also a Certified Mental Health First Aid Trainer and in my spare time I love to Line Dance!

I am a member of StateWide and the financial secretary of the Western NY Chapter. I heard about the Senior Medicare Patrol from Helen Sanders, StateWide Western NY Chapter President. Having taught and tutored for over 40 years in the Buffalo Area, becoming an SMP volunteer was a natural fit. I have been busy, even during the pandemic, sharing the word about StateWide and Medicare Fraud. I even distributed information at the voting sites in the city of Buffalo.

- Vanessa Birmingham, *SMP Volunteer* since 8/2020

Check out the [COVID-19 Vaccine Communication Toolkit](#) from the CDC.

This toolkit helps to educate about COVID-19 vaccines, raise awareness about the benefits of vaccination, and addresses common questions and concerns.

# STATE WIDE

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