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District Attorney Joyce Dudley Warns of Scams Related to the Coronavirus

Santa Barbara County District Attorney Joyce is informing the public that scams related to the coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, are rapidly increasing as the public health emergency continues. According to the FBI, the scams fall into several categories: 1) selling phony products that don't exist or don't work; 2) overcharging for goods in high demand, such as face masks or hand sanitizers; 3) emails supposedly from WHO or the CDC requesting personal information; and 4) bogus charities seeking donations.

In particular, District Attorney Dudley said that the FBI advises everyone to be on the lookout for the following:

- email asking you to verify your personal information in order to receive an economic stimulus check from the government;
- anyone selling products that claim to prevent, treat, diagnose or cure COVID-19;
- email claiming to be from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) or the World Health Organization (WHO) offering information on the virus if you click on a link.

Protect yourself and help stop criminal activity by remembering the following tips:

- Don't open attachments or click links within emails from senders you don't recognize.
- Do not provide your personal information (username, password, date of birth, social security number, etc.) in response to an email or robocall.
- Do not provide your Medicare number to anyone other than your doctor or health care provider.
- Verify the web address of legitimate websites and manually type them into your browser.

District Attorney Dudley asked anyone who believes they have been a victim of an internet scam or a cybercrime or want to report suspicious activity, it should be reported on the FBI's website at www.ic3.gov.

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