



# Memorandum

**To:** Pastors, Administrator & Principals  
**From:** Nancy F. Lystash, Parish Business Services  
**Date:** June 10, 2020  
**Re:** **Current Risk Alert – Coronavirus Scams**

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During the Coronavirus pandemic, there has been an increase in scam emails, websites and telephone calls preying on people's fears and uncertainties.

A frequent scam is an email that appears to come from the Pastor, principal or parish with an urgent request to transfer funds, purchase gift cards or to share financial account information.

This type of scam is prevalent on the Internet and is successful because people trust that the source is legitimate. In most cases, the email is being sent from another account but is made to look like it is coming from the Pastor, principal or parish.

**Some simple steps will prevent you from falling victim to this type of scam:**

Under no circumstances should the requested action be performed solely based on an email exchange. Emails can easily be spoofed to appear that they are coming from a specific person.

Prior to any action, confirm in person or over the phone the specific instructions. Do not simply exchange emails; confirmation needs to occur through another means. If you are confirming the instructions over the phone, validate the authenticity of the number you are dialing to your parish/school database records.

Do not share account number and banking information over email. These scams attempt to create a sense of urgency regarding the need to complete the fund transfer quickly, while also creating the illusion that the Pastor or principal is not available to do it themselves.

*June 10, 2020*

Anyone who feels that they have been the victim of this type of scam is urged to contact their local police department or report the scam to the New Jersey Cyber Crime Unit online.

<https://www.njsp.org/division/investigations/cyber-crimes.shtml>

If you have any questions, please contact me at [lystasna@rcan.org](mailto:lystasna@rcan.org) or 973-497-4074.