

FRAUD NOTICE

Be careful, Houston!

Scam callers and email scammers are using the COVID-19 crisis as a way to steal applicant information. Protect yourself from fraud by following these three steps:



WATCH OUT FOR WARNING SIGNS

- The caller claims that you must act or share information **right now** or lose access to the program
- An email comes from a personal address or any address that does not end in .gov
- An invitation to apply comes to you without a unique redemption code and instructions on how to use that code



VERIFY THAT THE CALLER IS REALLY FROM THE PROGRAM THEY CLAIM TO BE FROM

- Ask the caller to verify information you have already given the City on previous application or survey materials
- Ask the caller for their employee number and supervisor name, and then call our customer service line (832.393.0550) to verify that the employee works for our department



NEVER GIVE OUT CRUCIAL INFORMATION. THE CITY WILL NEVER REQUEST THIS INFORMATION VIA PHONE:

- Social Security Number
- Credit Card or Debit Card Information
- Bank Account Number or Routing Number
- Other compromising personal identifiable information

FAQ

Q: Have application processes for the City's Hurricane Harvey Recovery programs changed?

A: No. The City's Harvey Homeowner Assistance Program is still accepting application materials to our office, via mail, via secure web platforms, or via a City of Houston document runner. Make sure to speak to your Intake or Eligibility Specialist so that the proper coordination and arrangements can be made.

Q: Is the timeframe or money for any City of Houston programs closing?

A: No. Homeowners affected by Hurricane Harvey can continue to request assistance from the City's Harvey Homeowner Assistance Program.

Q: How can I identify that an e-mail is coming from the City of Houston?

A. All emails from the City of Houston will be from email addresses that end in .gov. If you receive a suspicious email communication, call our customer service line (832-393-0550) to verify that the sender works for our department.

Q. I received an invitation to apply to the City's Harvey Homeowner Assistance Program (HoAP). How do I know it is legitimate?

A. When the City of Houston sends an invitation to apply to the City's HoAP, it will be sent to you in a written format. The invitation is sent out via e-mail if there is an e-mail on file. If not, a hardcopy printout will be sent out. The invitation will contain a **unique redemption code** and instructions on how to redeem that invitation using the redemption code.

