

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

authorities say coronavirus has empowered a new class of scam arts and speculators who see the crisis as a money-making opportunity, and are marshaling manpower to stop them.

Mar. 31, 2020



Targeting the guys who would sell you the Brooklyn Bridge, state and federal authorities say [coronavirus](#) has empowered a new class of scam arts and speculators who see the crisis as a [money-making opportunity](#), and are marshaling manpower to stop them.

The hoarding of medical supplies, price gouging, charity scams, and other fraud will

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

Grewal, and Acting State Comptroller Kevin Walsh.

It's a national issue. Federal prosecutors on Monday [charged a Georgia man](#) for allegedly conspiring to defraud federal and private health-care benefit programs by submitting fraudulent testing claims for coronavirus and genetic cancer screenings.

New Jersey officials say the state has already [received more than 1,400 price-gouging complaints](#) and have announced that they will take "aggressive measures" to tackle the problem.

Grewal noted the state has already issued about 160 cease-and-desist letters and served nearly 30 subpoenas.

"The complaints that we received included allegations that details are unfairly raising prices on surgical masks, on hand sanitizers, on disinfecting sprays and wipes, food, bottled water and similar items," he said last week.

Gov. Phil Murphy has also taken aim at the issue.

"There is a special place in hell for people who take advantage of this health crisis," the governor said at a press briefing last week. "There sure is heck no time for it in the war that we're under."

Grewal added, though, that many of the investigations to date have determined that prices at New Jersey stores have increased appropriately after suppliers hiked prices for retailers.

The new joint task force said it will form joint investigative and prosecution teams to quickly address fraud complaints, and share information about common frauds.

**Among their targets:**

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

- **Supply scams:** Like unsolicited emails promising riches to those who respond, the internet is now awash with fake websites, social media accounts, and email addresses claiming to sell medical supplies currently in high demand.
- **Charity scams:** Some are soliciting donations for individuals, groups, and areas affected by COVID-19.

“An unprecedented public health crisis creates an unprecedented opportunity for scammers and con artists,” Grewal said in a statement.

Residents seeking to report possible misconduct can call the National Center for Disaster Fraud hotline at (866) 720-5721 or [disaster@leo.gov](mailto:disaster@leo.gov).

=====

If you would like updates on New Jersey-specific coronavirus news, [subscribe to our Coronavirus in N.J. newsletter](#).

=====

Ted Sherman may be reached at [tsherman@njadvancemedia.com](mailto:tsherman@njadvancemedia.com). Follow him on Twitter [@TedShermanSL](#). Facebook: [@TedSherman.reporter](#). Find [NJ.com on Facebook](#).

\_\_\_\_\_

©2020 NJ Advance Media Group, Edison, N.J.

Visit NJ Advance Media Group, Edison, N.J. at [www.nj.com](http://www.nj.com)

Distributed by [Tribune Content Agency, LLC](#).

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us