

Scammers Continue to Impersonate State Regulators: What You Need to Know



WASHINGTON
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An ongoing fraud ring has been preying on healthcare practitioners for the last year. The fraudulent behavior includes: using the Washington Medical Commission (WMC) phone number, email and web URL; Impersonating Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) agents; and posing as Department of Health (DOH) officials. All to make providers believe they are in danger of discipline or loss of license.

The scam involves using personal information to exploit you for money or information to execute scams on others.

Recent near victims of this scam were:

- Sent official looking documents on fake letterhead from the WMC and U.S. Department of Justice. The letters included forged signatures of WMC officials and fictitious investigative staff.
- Contacted via telephone to discuss the provider's "over-prescribing of opioids".
- Told they were under official investigation for drug related charges and that their license had been suspended.
- Told not to check the WMC website because that would be an admission of guilt.
- Recipients of emails from a wmc.wa.gov address.

Legitimate regulatory agencies will not:

- Ask you for money.
- Ask you to respond to any action in less than twenty days.
- Advise against speaking with a lawyer.
- Ask you to confirm personal details, passwords, or social security numbers.

Protect yourself by adhering to the following recommendations:

1. Never click on links or download attachments from suspicious senders.
2. Do not fall prey to a manufactured urgency. A vital component of this fraud is the urgency of request or demand. A legitimate regulatory agency will inform you of your rights and you have a legally protected timeframe to respond.
3. If you suspect that you are being contacted by a fraudulent regulator, you can verify the request with the WMC by calling: (360) 236-2750.
4. Restrict your online personal information. Scammers leverage information from social media accounts and other public forums.

If you have verified that you are being targeted, [file a complaint with the State Attorney General](#) and contact your local police department right away.