



## **Chatham County Board of Commissioners**

**124 Bull Street, Savannah, GA 31401**

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### ***NEWS RELEASE***

**For Immediate Release**

**March 23, 2020**

### **Georgia State-wide Rumors and Scams**

**Chatham County (March 23, 2020)** - On a daily basis, distinguishing between rumors and factual information on social media can be challenging. With a public health pandemic, such as the COVID-19 outbreak, it is very easy for false information to spread quickly. There are several ads, promotions and websites that prey on vulnerable individuals in an attempt to sell them items to decrease their risk of contracting COVID-19 or offer services that do not exist. Stay on the lookout for promotions that claim their products can treat, prevent or cure the Coronavirus/COVID-19. Chatham County officials are asking everyone to be mindful of the source of the information and to only follow guidance from sites including the Centers for Disease Control, The Georgia Department of Public Health and other local, state or national government agencies.

In a recent press release from Georgia's Attorney General Chris Carr's office, Carr said "Scammers may try to take advantage of consumers during a time when fears and health concerns are at an all-time high...At best, these fake cures are simply a waste of money, while at worst, they can have dire consequences."

According to AG Carr, the following companies have received warning letters from the FTC and FDA for selling unapproved or misbranded products that the companies claimed could treat or prevent the Coronavirus:

- Vital Silver
- Aromatherapy Ltd.
- N-ergetics
- GuruNanda, LLC
- Vivify Holistic Clinic
- Herbal Amy LLC
- The Jim Bakker Show

AG Carr also discussed how the FDA has warned consumers against drinking a product called “Miracle Mineral Solution” or “MMS,” which has been touted as a way to prevent coronavirus and cure a myriad of other illnesses, including cancer and HIV/AIDS. The FDA warns that this product is essentially a “dangerous bleach” that could cause severe vomiting and acute liver failure. Consumers should also be wary of claims that products containing colloidal silver can prevent or cure the Coronavirus. Not only is there no medical evidence supporting these claims, the FDA and National Institutes of Health warn that colloidal silver is [not safe to use](#) and can even cause argyria, a bluish-gray skin discoloration that’s typically permanent. If you’re tempted to buy an unproven product or one with uncertain claims, check with your doctor or other health care professional first.

Locally, there have been several rumors and scams circulating. Please see below for the rumor reported as well as the truth regarding the rumor.

### **Local Rumors**

\*\* For an ongoing list of rumors and myths on a national level, please visit:  
<https://www.fema.gov/coronavirus-rumor-control>

**Rumor:** The Georgia Port Authority is closing.

**Truth:** The Georgia Authority is operating normally with no delays or closures at this time.

**Rumor:** Gas stations are closing pumps around the area due to COVID-19 concerns.

**Truth:** This rumor is not true and gas stations are open and operational.

**Rumor:** There is a National lockdown and the entire country will be quarantined for two weeks.

**Truth:** There is no national lockdown. Be mindful of sources of information. For the most up to date information regarding COVID-19, visit: <https://www.coronavirus.gov/>

**Rumor:** I need to stockpile as many groceries and supplies as I can because they are going to run out.

**Truth:** Please only buy the items that you need for your family for one week. If everyone stockpiles, there will not be enough for everyone to get what they need. Demand has been high for grocery items, cleaning products and healthcare products- give stores time to restock.

**Rumor:** The government is handing out \$1,000 checks to everyone.

**Truth:** According to [FEMA.gov/coronavirus-rumor-control](https://www.fema.gov/coronavirus-rumor-control), The U.S. Government is not mailing checks in response to COVID-19 at this time. Anyone who tells you they can get you the money now is a scammer. It’s important that you only trust information coming from official sources. The Federal Trade Commission recently provided more

information about this scam and other common COVID-19 related scams on their website

### **Local Scams**

\*\*\*Please note, the Department of Public Health clinical services will never ask for payment information or personal information over the phone. They will not offer to come to your home to offer tests or withhold information regarding your health for lack of payment over the phone

Reported Scam: There has been a report of an individual calling residents pretending to be the Georgia Department of Public Health informing residents that there is a COVID-19 testing kit that can be mailed to senior citizens for a small fee.

**Truth**: At this time, there are no mail-in tests available for COVID-19

Reported Scam: There are reports that an individual from the Department of Public Health will come to your home to perform a COVID-19 test.

**Truth**: At this time, there are no home tests available for COVID-19 nor will a Department of Public Health employee come to your home to perform a test.

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