

BEWARE OF SCAM PHONE CALLS TARGETING LICENSES OF DENTISTS AND OTHER MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

November 20, 2024

The Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA) is warning the public about phone scammers impersonating state officials and government agencies to target medical professionals, particularly those in the dental field. These scammers make false threats of investigations in an attempt to obtain sensitive personal information.

Reports have surfaced of individuals pretending to be state officials contacting current or former dental licensees, falsely claiming that the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is conducting an ongoing investigation into their professional license. The scammers may request various personal information and in some cases, even use Caller ID spoofing to make it appear as though the call is coming from a legitimate government agency, to increase the illusion of credibility for the scam.

Although recent incidents have primarily involved dental professionals, other medical professionals, including nurses, pharmacists and others, have been targeted earlier this year and may continue to be targeted.

It is important to note that the Department of Health and Human Services does not have the authority to suspend or revoke professional or vocational licenses, nor can it initiate an investigation into a professional's license. Only the 52 licensing boards, commissions and programs that are affiliated with the PVL division of the DCCA can discipline the licensee after appropriate notification and investigation. The 52 boards, commissions and programs do not, however, conduct investigations. The Regulated Industries Complaints Office (RICO), in the DCCA, conducts independent investigations into licensees. RICO's official communications are sent on letterhead and include contact information for RICO offices. RICO does not ask for sensitive personal information over the phone, or attempt to solicit wire transfers, and RICO cannot take action against a licensee. Only the boards, commissions and programs can.

Please remain vigilant when receiving calls from state officials or government agencies. Remember, they will never call you to solicit money or threaten arrest. If you receive a suspicious call, hang up immediately without providing any personal information. To verify the caller's legitimacy, contact the agency directly using a verified phone number (available at <https://cca.hawaii.gov/pvl/contact/>) instead of relying on caller ID. Impersonating a public servant is a criminal offense and will be thoroughly investigated and prosecuted.

If you have received any calls similar to what has been described above or are seeking to verify contact from DCCA, please call your respective licensing board/program or PVL at 808-586-3000. A list of programs and contact information is available at <https://cca.hawaii.gov/pvl/>.

For more information on the recent scams targeting dental licensees, please refer to this [notice from the Hawaii Dental Association](#)



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