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News Release

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FRAUD ALERT:

BEWARE OF CALLERS SEEKING PERSONAL INFORMATION WHO CLAIM TO BE FROM STATE HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Maryland Attorney General J. Joseph Curran is warning all Maryland residents about a new phone scam in which the caller claims to work for the Maryland Department of Health and attempts to get the consumer to disclose personal information. According to other Attorney General's offices, similar scams are appearing throughout the country.

Maryland residents have received unsolicited calls from callers claiming to be employed by the Maryland Health Department who tell citizens that they have won \$1,000 from the Department, and to claim their prize they need to provide personal information. Consumers in other states have received calls in which they are told the Health Department has Medical Discount Vouchers for them. The callers claim to already have the consumer's name, address, the name of their bank, and their bank account routing number and ask the consumers to "verify" their identity by reciting their checking account number.

"Never, ever provide personal or financial information to an unknown caller," says Attorney General Curran. "All of these callers are scam artists and they are just trying to get your personal or financial information in order to steal your money or falsely obtain credit in your name. The Maryland Health Department is not calling people offering prizes. Government agencies don't do that."

Consumers who believe they may be victims of fraud should immediately contact their bank and close their account. For more information about what to do if you become a victim of identity theft, contact the Federal Trade Commission at 1-877-ID-THEFT (1-877-438-4338) or call the Attorney General's Office at 1-888-743-0023.