



BUTLER COUNTY, OHIO

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

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Ref: PPE Fraud Scheme // Be Ready & Aware

To: Department Heads / Procurement Representatives / Community Partners;

BCEMA wants to share “buyers beware” information seen across the country with regards to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). As the supply chain continues to stabilize from the COVID-19 pandemic, the shortages in PPE and sanitizing agents have encouraged some unscrupulous groups to scam agencies making purchases. The following are just a few of the more recent PPE scams that have popped up in various states regarding PPE procurement:

- Re-boxing of expired or unserviceable examination gloves into new boxes for resale through non-standard channels
- Using a fake “FBI Asset Verification” line as a way to give credibility to an organization who is about to take your money and run. There is no such thing as an FBI Asset Verification department
- Sending unordered shipments to large organizations w/ unserviceable PPE [that is used, expired, or rejected] and billing the company
- Billing organizations with small dollar billing amounts in the hopes of slipping through the system
- Requiring up-front payment and then never responding to inquiries
- Insisting on wired funds to pay their suppliers in China with the promise of goods to be shipped quickly
- Spoofing of email/website information to appear as a legitimate or identical to another business
- Last minute changes during the ordering process to make payment through a different channel

Steps to avoid being caught up in one of these types of schemes:

- Slow down...if you are in a hurry, you might miss a critical indication that you are about to be scammed. Try to order from reputable sources.
- Get information in writing (if a new vendor) and verify contact through multiple means. (phone, email, etc.)
- If your trusted sources are out, consider using the Ohio Manufacturing Alliance (<https://repurposingproject.com/>) for Ohio based companies.
- If you are purchasing bulk, consider leveraging the State Invitation To Bid (ITB) for PPE and get a better pooled rate. Here are some contacts:

Butler County Emergency Management Information Hotline – (513) 785-5800.



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FEMA Region V shared an update on the PPE supply chain from a nationwide perspective. We are much better off today than 60 days ago, but we still have some supply chain issues. All of the major medical-surgical distributors are reporting significant backorders, but we are not aware of anyone being totally out of PPE at this point. Distributor allocations are being done to help ensure an even distribution among all areas, but priority is given to current hot spot locations (currently 12 states – Ohio has 3 metro areas on the watch list). Conservation of PPE is still highly recommended as much as possible. We are also seeing the “spot buy” market become littered with non-traditional medical equipment distributors and high prices, so anyone going out on the open market for PPE buys really needs to do their due diligence on who they are buying from.

Sent by Butler County EMA.

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