

## **FAKE Quick Response Codes (QR Codes)**

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Quick Response codes, or QR codes, are a very popular and convenient way to get information by scanning the barcode to be directly connected to a website; however, it's important to remain vigilant when using them.

There are many legitimate and helpful uses for QR codes, from paying for parking to viewing a restaurant menu. But since scammers often use QR codes to carry out their schemes, it's important to learn how to spot a fake!

### **What You Should Know:**

QR codes may look genuine, but they can redirect you to fake websites designed to steal your personal information. Scammers create QR codes to trick people into visiting a fraudulent website or downloading malware that compromises their personal information.

For example, scammers may:

- Cover official QR codes with fake ones on parking meters, menus, or magazines.
- Send QR codes via email or text message pretending to be from delivery companies.
- Request that you confirm your information due to suspicious activity on your account using imposter QR codes.
- Place harmful codes on social media advertisements.

### **TIPS:**

#### **Verify the Source**

Before scanning a QR code, make sure it comes from a trusted and reliable source.

#### **Inspect the Code**

Scammers may use tactics that mirror a legitimate QR code. Take a moment to examine the QR code closely. Look for any signs of tampering, unusual colors, or misspellings. If something seems suspicious, it's best to avoid scanning the code.

#### **Be Cautious of Unsolicited QR Codes**

Avoid scanning unsolicited QR codes received via email or text message from unknown sources

#### **Be Aware of Urgent Requests Using QR Codes**

Fraudsters often pretend to be government officials and use fake QR codes to defraud people.

For example, a scammer may pose as a Social Security employee claiming that you have an outstanding debt or a problem with your account and demanding immediate payment. The scammer may send fake QR codes via text or email requesting the payment. Remember, government agencies like Social Security and Medicare will never request any form of payment, especially using a QR code.

**REPORT all scams to the Arkansas SMP — 866-726-2916**

## [Protecting Yourself from QR Code Fraud | SSA](#)