



FSA - Keeping You Safe

How to Protect Yourself While Shopping or Donating Online

With COVID-19, there will be more online shopping this year than ever before. There are many benefits to the convenience of online shopping, but there are also important things that you need to watch out for. Be on the lookout for fake products, websites and tickets. Fake products can be found on sites like Facebook Marketplace or OfferUp and on fake websites. Be mindful of where your packages are being delivered and watch out for porch pirates. The [Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office](#)¹ is offering to have packages sent to their office for pickup. In order to get your packages, you must show a government-issued photo ID and an order tracking number.

For more information on scams to watch out for while shopping online this holiday season, read here from [State Attorney Andrew Warren](#)².

Quick tips to remember:

- When shopping online, **use secure websites for purchases**. Look for the icon of a locked padlock at the bottom of the screen or “https” in the URL or web address.
- **Beware of online “bargains”** from companies with whom you are unfamiliar with—if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!
- **Use a credit card**. Debit cards draw money directly from bank accounts. Using a credit card limits the amount of damage an attacker can do if they get your information.
- Once you buy gifts, you need to protect your packages from porch pirates. **Consider curbside pickup or ship them to a central location** like your local sheriff’s office, if they are offering this service.
- **Be wary of emails** and clicking links in the email.
- **Directly log into websites** by typing the web address yourself.
- Make sure your **information is being encrypted**.

For more tips please visit the Florida Sheriffs Association’s Crime Prevention Tips: flsheriffs.org/crime-prevention

¹ <https://www.wtsp.com/article/news/local/hillsboroughcounty/holiday-packages-sent-to-hillsborough-county-sheriff-for-safety/67-a7cd4a50-b9f6-45df-8198-d1f55e2bba2d>

² https://www.wtsp.com/article/money/consumer/online-shopping-scams-holiday-season/67-346e74bf-1076-4020-a816-1e1766c8fd91?fbclid=IwAR3ZZC7HZvTO5W8_1g52fTQxfapocSb_jBmsZ17IEActDLxef_H8u9Yz7wM