

## Dear small businesses, beware of scammers

The [Department of Small Business Development](#) has issued a [warning to small businesses](#) against fraudulent agencies soliciting payment to fast track applications for Covid-19 Relief funding.



Source: [pixabay.com](#)

“ The Department of Small Business Development warns SMMEs against fraudulent agencies purporting to be entities of the Department. It is unfortunate that even during this world pandemic, South Africans are confronted with opportunistic fraudsters who will take advantage of the socio-economic distress the country is challenged with. The Department is aware of suspicious email messages attempting to take advantage of the Covid-19 relief funding for SMMEs and soliciting administration fees to fast-track applications.

Cybercriminals use emergencies such as the National Disaster to steal money from victims, perform identity theft or pretend to be representatives of the Department and its agencies using fake emails to scam unsuspecting recipients. The Department has no affiliation with these entities and does not charge any fees for services offered to SMMEs. We wish to state categorically that none of our employees and officials are to be paid either through emails, inboxes, direct messages(DM) for services rendered on behalf of the Department. The facilitation to access services for SMMEs is done for free. Any SMME who receives such a request must immediately report the incident to our Covid-19 Hotline 086 677 7867 or send an e-mail to [info@dsbd.gov.za](mailto:info@dsbd.gov.za). ”

Visit official websites to access valid information on [www.dsbd.gov.za](http://www.dsbd.gov.za); [www.sefa.org.za](http://www.sefa.org.za); [www.seda.org.za](http://www.seda.org.za); or [www.mybindu.org.za](http://www.mybindu.org.za). SMMEs are encouraged to register their businesses on [www.smmesa.gov.za](http://www.smmesa.gov.za).