

Tax Scams / Consumer Alerts

Source: IRS website – Newsroom/tax-scams and consumer alerts.

Thousands of people have lost millions of dollars and their personal information to tax scams. Scammers use the regular mail, telephone, or email to set up individuals, businesses, payroll and tax professionals.

The IRS doesn't **initiate** contact with taxpayers by email, text messages or social media channels to request personal or financial information. Recognize the telltale signs of a scam.

Scams Targeting Taxpayers

IRS-Impersonation Telephone Scams

A sophisticated phone scam targeting taxpayers, including recent immigrants, has been making the rounds throughout the country. Callers claim to be IRS employees, using fake names and bogus IRS identification badge numbers. They may know a lot about their targets, and they usually alter the caller ID to make it look like the IRS is calling.

Victims are told they owe money to the IRS and it must be paid promptly through a gift card or wire transfer. Victims may be threatened with arrest, deportation or suspension of a business or driver's license. In many cases, the caller becomes hostile and insulting. Victims may be told they have a refund due to try to trick them into sharing private information. If the phone isn't answered, the scammers often leave an "urgent" callback request.

- Please See: [Consumer Alert: Scammers Change Tactics, Once Again](#)

Some thieves have used video **relay services** (VRS) to try to **scam** deaf and hard of hearing individuals. Taxpayers are urged not trust calls just because they are made through VRS, as interpreters don't screen calls for validity. For details see the IRS video: [Tax Scams via Video Relay Service](#).

Limited English Proficiency victims are often approached in their native language, threatened with deportation, police arrest and license revocation, among other things. IRS urges all taxpayers caution before paying unexpected tax bills. Please see: [IRS Alerts Taxpayers with Limited English Proficiency of Ongoing Phone Scams](#). Note that the IRS doesn't:

- Call to demand immediate payment using a specific payment method such as a prepaid debit card, gift card or wire transfer. Generally, the IRS will first mail you a bill if you owe any taxes.
- Threaten to bring in local police or other law-enforcement groups to have you arrested for not paying.
- Demand payment without giving you the opportunity to question or appeal the amount they say you owe.
- Ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone.



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