

Beware of Scammers Pretending to be IRS Agents

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Tax season is here and aside from meeting with your tax preparer, you need to be aware of the ever-alarming tax fraud scams that have affected our society. One of the main scams the IRS is reporting are telephone scams, where criminals pose as the IRS to trick victims out of their money or personal information. The Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, or TIGTA, has received reports that about 736,000 scam contacts have been made since October 2013, and over \$23 million has been stolen as a result of these scams.

These scammers have gotten more sophisticated over time and can even manipulate caller ID to make it look like they are calling from the IRS. These calls come in the form of robo (automated) calls, in-person phone interviews, deceptive emails, etc. The IRS doesn't initiate contact with taxpayers by email, text messages or social media. Here is some important information and some helpful tips to help you avoid falling victim to these scams:

1. The IRS will never call you directly and demand for immediate payment. The IRS will always first send you a bill or notice in the mail
2. The IRS will never require you to pay a certain way (i.e. prepaid debit card)
3. The IRS will never ask for your credit or debit card over the phone
4. The IRS will never threaten to bring police or other agencies to arrest or deport you for not paying
5. The IRS will always give you the opportunity to question or appeal the amount you owe
6. The IRS will never initiate contact with you via email. If you see an email from the IRS, do not reply and do not open any attachments or links.

If you are concerned that you are being contacted by a tax scammer, hang up immediately. You can call the IRS directly at 1 (800) 829-1040, or call TIGTA to report the call at 1(800) 366-4484