

ALERT: BEWARE OF TAX SCAMS



Tax season may be over, but scammers are still going strong, the I.R.S. warns.

Scams usually either offer a refund, or claim you have a tax bill.

- On the **phone**, smooth-talking people pretending to be from the I.R.S. may claim you must pay an overdue “tax bill” immediately through a prepaid debit card or wire transfer. They may have personal information about you, such as your address, that makes the call convincing and scary.

Scammers often have fake caller IDs so your phone “IRS,” “Internal Revenue Service,” or something else official. They may use robocalls too.

RED FLAGS:

- 1) They want payment immediately.
- 2) They want payment via a prepaid debit card or wire transfer (payment methods that are hard for investigators to track.)
- 3) They can become aggressive, bullying people with threats such as arrest, deportation or revocation of a person’s driver’s license.

- By **email**, scammers may say you need to click on official-looking links to get a refund. They may also ask for personal information. They can use this for a variety of fraud schemes.

RED FLAGS:

- 1) Getting an email from the I.R.S. is a red flag unless you have been working with someone from the I.R.S. already. The I.R.S. first contacts people by mail, not phone or email.
- 2) They ask for personal information.

Stop tax scammers in their tracks!

These professional con artists have technology, skills and practice, and are very convincing — but you can protect yourself and foil them by taking these steps:

- **Phone calls:** If you receive a phone call with any red flags, or you just want to be cautious, **HANG UP IMMEDIATELY.**
 - Call the I.R.S. at **1-800-829-1040** to verify whether the call was legitimate or a scam, *or*
 - Call Alaska’s Senior Medicare Patrol, **1-800-478-6065**, *or*
 - File an online report with the Federal Trade Commission Complaint Assistant at **www.FTC.gov** ; include the words “IRS Telephone Scam.”
- **Emails:** If you receive a suspicious email, report it to **phishing@irs.gov**.

The Medicare Patrol is looking out for you!

Alaska's Medicare Information Office

For more information about Alaska’s Medicare Information Office, visit **www.medicare.alaska.gov**.

