



FSA - Keeping You Safe

IRS Tax Scams

The first quarter of a year typically has a heavy focus on tax season. This also means that tax scams impersonating the IRS will begin to increase. These scams lead to millions of dollars being lost and personal information being stolen.

The most common method of communication for these scams comes through a phone call with a Washington, D.C. area code. The scammer will tell you their fake badge number and provide you with some of your personal information such as your address and the last four of your social security number to try and convince you that they are the IRS.

It is important to remind you that the IRS will not contact you via email, text messages, or social media channels. Most of these scams will occur from a phone call or email, but mail scams are also possible because scammers recognize that the IRS primarily communicates with a letter through traditional mail.

Thanks to the IRS and Attorney General Ashley Moody, we have compiled some tips for you to recognize a scam:

1. **Unsolicited Calls** – Fraud calls often include high-pressure tactics from the caller such as a threat of loss, arrest, deportation, or license revocation if immediate action is not taken through payment by wire transfer, credit card, prepaid debit, or gift cards. Remember, the IRS will not make first contact by phone call. You will be notified through the United States Mail.
2. **Immediate Payment** – Even though the scammer will request immediate payment, the IRS will not demand you to pay them immediately using a specific payment method. The IRS will allow you time to respond to the request.
3. **Law Enforcement** – The IRS will not threaten to send local law enforcement to you if your taxes or fines are not paid immediately. This is a scare tactic to try and force your fear to set in and make an irrational decision.
4. **Details** – The IRS is very detailed and their instructions will be specific in their letter. If the letter seems unclear or rushed, you should be cautious. Official IRS letters will contain a notice number or letter number in the top or bottom right-hand corner of the notice.

If you ever have any doubt that the communication you are receiving from the IRS is authentic or not, there are opportunities for you to contact a trusted source to confirm the legitimacy.

- Contact the IRS directly: 1-800-829-1040
- Report suspected IRS phone scams to the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration: 1-800-366-4484
- If you feel that your identity has been stolen or a fraudulent tax return has been filed on your behalf, contact the IRS Identity Protection Specialized Unit: 1-800-908-4490
- Report suspicious online or emailed phishing scams: phishing@irs.gov

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