



Don't Fall for the Call

Every year, we hear about the newest IRS tax scams and feel confident that we won't become a victim. But then we receive a phone call from an IRS agent demanding we pay a tax bill we didn't know we owed. The phone number on the caller ID appears to be a legitimate IRS phone number so we begin to question the validity of the call, especially when the agent mentions jailtime or revoking a driver's license for failure to pay.

We receive phone calls every year from clients, family and friends describing situations like the one above and asking if they have been scammed. Criminals are becoming increasingly creative with technology and aggressive with their scamming attempts so it's important for taxpayers to remain vigilant when receiving these calls. There are certain things the IRS will never do or ask for over the phone and taxpayers should report the call to the proper authorities if they receive a questionable call.

The IRS Will Never*:

- 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 a bill to any taxpayer who owes taxes.
- Threaten to immediately bring in local police or other law-enforcement groups to have the taxpayer arrested for not paying.
- Demand that taxes be paid without giving taxpayers the opportunity to question or appeal the amount owed.
- Ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone.
- Call you about an unexpected refund.

For Taxpayers Who Don't Owe Taxes or Don't Think They Do:

- Do not give out any information. Hang up immediately.
- Contact TIGTA to report the call. Use their IRS Impersonation Scam Reporting web page. Alternatively, call 800-366-4484.
- Report it to the Federal Trade Commission. Use the "FTC Complaint Assistant" on FTC.gov. Please add "IRS Telephone Scam" in the notes.

For Those Who Owe Taxes or Think They Do: Call the IRS at 800-829-1040. IRS workers can help.

Although phone scams are highly popular amongst criminals, they will also target taxpayers through various other schemes. Each year, the IRS releases their "Dirty Dozen" list of the top 12 tax scams used by crooks throughout the year. Click [here](#) to view the list, along with the IRS's recommendations on how consumers can protect themselves from becoming a victim of an illegal scam.

*U.S. Department of the Treasury. Internal Revenue Service. (2018). Publication IR-2018-66, March 21, 2018: IRS wraps up 'Dirty Dozen' list of tax scams for 2018; Encourages taxpayers to remain vigilant. Retrieved from <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/phone-scams-pose-serious-threat-remain-on-irs-dirty-dozen-list-of-tax-scams>