

IRS News Release

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Watch Out for Tax Scams as Filing Season Opening Nears

IRS YouTube Videos:

Tax Scams: [English](#) | [Spanish](#) | [ASL](#)

ID Theft: Are You a Victim of Identity Theft? [English](#) | [Spanish](#) | [ASL](#)

ID Theft: Protect Yourself From Identity Theft [English](#) | [Spanish](#) | [ASL](#)

ID Theft: IRS Efforts on Identity Theft [English](#) | [Spanish](#)

Podcasts

ID Theft: Protect Yourself from Identity Theft [English](#) | [Spanish](#)

ID Theft: Are You a Victim of Identity Theft? [English](#) | [Spanish](#)

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WASHINGTON — With the start of the 2014 tax season approaching on Jan. 31, the Internal Revenue Service urged taxpayers to be aware that tax-related scams using the IRS name proliferate during this time of year.

Tax scams can take many forms, with perpetrators posing as the IRS in everything from e-mail refund schemes to phone impersonators. The IRS warned taxpayers to be vigilant of any unexpected communication that is purportedly from the IRS at the start of tax season.

The IRS encourages taxpayers to be on the lookout for phone and email scams that use the IRS as a lure. The IRS does not initiate contact with taxpayers by email to request personal or financial information. This includes any type of electronic communication, such as text messages and social media channels. The IRS also does not ask for personal identification numbers (PINs), passwords or similar confidential access information for credit card, bank or other financial accounts. Recipients should not open any attachments or click on any links contained in the message. Instead, forward the e-mail to phishing@irs.gov.

Additional information on how to [report phishing scams](#) involving the IRS is available on the genuine IRS website, IRS.gov.

In addition, the IRS continues to aggressively expand its efforts to protect and prevent refund fraud involving identity theft as well as work with federal, state and local officials to pursue the perpetrators of this fraud.

The IRS offers several suggestions for taxpayers to help protect themselves against scams and identity theft:

- Don't carry your Social Security card or any documents that include your Social Security number (SSN) or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN).

- Don't give a business your SSN or ITIN just because they ask. Give it only when required.
- Protect your financial information.
- Check your credit report every 12 months.
- Secure personal information in your home.
- Protect your personal computers by using firewalls and anti-spam/virus software, updating security patches and changing passwords for Internet accounts.
- Don't give personal information over the phone, through the mail or on the Internet unless you have initiated the contact and are sure of the recipient.

For more information, see the special [identity theft](#) section on IRS.gov and [IRS Fact Sheet 2014-1](#), IRS Combats Identity Theft and Refund Fraud on Many Fronts.

Taxpayers also should be very careful when choosing a tax preparer. While most preparers provide excellent service to their clients, a few unscrupulous return preparers file false and fraudulent tax returns and ultimately defraud their clients. It is important to know that even if someone else prepares your return, you are ultimately responsible for all the information on the tax return.

Refer to our [Tips to Help you Choose a Tax Preparer](#) for the upcoming 2014 Tax Season starting Jan. 31.