

Sample article for organizations to use to reach customers (564 word count)

Post the following article on your websites and/or use in other communication vehicles to alert your customers about the latest tax scam.

Scammers are targeting parents and students this back-to-school season

As schools around the nation re-open, be aware that telephone scammers are targeting students and parents during the back-to-school season and demanding payments for non-existent taxes, such as the “Federal Student Tax.”

The scammers claim to be from the IRS and call students and demand they wire money immediately to pay a fake federal student tax. If the student does not comply, the scammer becomes aggressive and threatens to report the student to the police to be arrested.

“Although variations of the IRS impersonation scam continue year-round, they tend to peak when scammers find prime opportunities to strike,” said IRS Commissioner John Koskinen. “As students and parents enter the new school year, they should remain alert to bogus calls, including those demanding fake tax payments from students.”

Scammers are constantly identifying new tactics to carry out their crimes in new and unsuspecting ways. This year, they’re using a variety of schemes to fool people into paying money or giving up personal information. Some of these include:

- Altering the caller ID on incoming phone calls in a “spoofing” attempt to make it seem like the IRS, the local police or another agency is calling.
- Imitating software providers to trick tax professionals -- [IR-2016-103](#).
- Demanding fake tax payments using iTunes gift cards -- [IR-2016-99](#).
- Soliciting Forms W-2 information from payroll and human resources professionals -- [IR-2016-34](#).
- “Verifying” tax return information over the phone -- [IR-2016-40](#).
- Pretending to be from the tax preparation industry -- [IR-2016-28](#).

If you receive an unexpected call from someone claiming to be from the IRS, remember that 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 you a bill if you owe any taxes.

- Threaten to immediately bring in local police or other law-enforcement groups to have you arrested for not paying.
- Demand that you pay taxes without giving you the opportunity to question or appeal the amount they say you owe.
- Ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone.

If you get a suspicious phone call from someone claiming to be from the IRS and asking for money, here's what you should do:

- Hang up immediately. Do not give out any information.
- Contact TIGTA to report the call. Use their "[IRS Impersonation Scam Reporting](#)" web page or 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.
- If you think you might owe taxes, call the IRS directly at 800-829-1040.

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NOTE TO EDITOR: Below are links to help taxpayers find more information about phishing, tax scams and identity theft.

- [Report Phishing and Online Scams](#)
- [Tax Scams/Consumer Alerts](#)
- [Identity Protection: Prevention, Detection and Victim Assistance](#)
- [Taxpayer Guide to Identity Theft](#)

Videos

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

Podcasts

- Tax Scams: [English](#)
- Dirty Dozen: [English](#) | [Spanish](#)

On Twitter? Send these Tweets:

#IRS to college students: Be wary of IRS impersonators and a "federal student #tax" which does NOT exist <http://go.usa.gov/cSqHP> #SCAM