

Sample article for organizations to use to reach customers and/or taxpayers

Customize and provide the following article to alert your customers about tax scams and how to avoid becoming victims.

Protect yourself and your Social Security benefits — Don't become a victim of a tax scam

The IRS is warning people across the country about tax scams involving Social Security benefits. Con artists are preying on low income individuals and the elderly, talking them into filing false claims for tax credits, rebates or refunds based on withholdings from Social Security benefits. *Don't let this happen to you or someone you know.*

Unsuspecting people are most likely to get caught up in scams. Everyone, including those that help others prepare returns, should remain vigilant. *If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.*

You should be wary of the following:

- False claims for refunds or rebates based on excess or withheld Social Security benefits.
- Claims that Treasury Form 1080 can be used to transfer funds from the Social Security Administration to the IRS, allowing a payout from the IRS.
- Unfamiliar for-profit tax services teaming up with local churches.
- Home-made flyers and brochures implying credits or refunds are available without proof of eligibility.
- Offers of free money with no documentation required.
- Advertisements promising refunds for "Low Income – No Documents Tax Returns."
- Claims for the expired Economic Recovery Credit Program or Recovery Rebate Credit.
- Advice on claiming the Earned Income Tax Credit based on exaggerated reports of self-employment income.

These con artists build false hopes and charge people good money for bad advice. In the end, the victim discovers their claim is rejected or the refund barely exceeds what they paid the promoter. Meanwhile, their money and the promoters are long gone — and the victim may have to return the money to the IRS and even pay penalties and interest.

Don't become a victim. If you have a question or concern about a tax credit or program, visit www.irs.gov, call the IRS toll-free number at 800-829-1040 or visit a local IRS [Taxpayer Assistance Center](#).

For questions about rebates, credits and benefits from other federal agencies contact the relevant agency directly for accurate information.

Remember, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

NOTE TO EDITOR: *Below are links to related items about this topic at www.irs.gov.*

- [IRS Urges Taxpayers to Avoid Becoming Victims of Tax Scams](#)
- [IRS YouTube – Tax Refund Scams](#)