



Consumer Tipsheet: Avoiding and Reporting IRS Imposter Scams

Imposter scammers pretend to be someone else in order to get money or personal information from you. Often they pose as IRS agents. They may try to scare you into paying them by telling you an agent is about to arrest you or take you to court for failing to pay your taxes.

Important Things to Know

- No legitimate government agency accepts payments by money wires, reloadable prepaid cards or gift cards.
- Federal agents and police will NEVER call you to say they are on the way to arrest you.
- Scammers can spoof Caller IDs and emails to look like they are from the IRS.
- The IRS initiates contact with taxpayers by mail, not by phone or email. You can always call the IRS at 1-800-829-1040 to see if you owe money or check the status of your repayment plan.

Tips to Avoid Losing Money to an Imposter Scam

- Stop! When you're scared or panicked, you're less likely to spot clues it's a scam. Check out alarming claims before you send money to anyone.
- Hang up on callers who threaten you or demand money! Do not interact in any way.
- Do not read gift card or prepaid card numbers to callers. It lets them drain money from the card.
- If you paid a scammer, immediately contact the fraud department of the payment service you used (for example your bank, or if you paid with iTunes cards, Apple).

Report IRS robocalls

- If you lost money to a tax scam, file a complaint with [Tigta.gov](https://www.tigta.gov) or 1-800-366-4484.
- If you revealed an account or Social Security number, visit [Identitytheft.gov](https://www.identitytheft.gov) or call 1-877-438-4338 for a personalized ID theft recovery plan from the FTC.
- To report robocalls, file a complaint with the FTC at [Consumer.FTC.gov](https://www.consumer.ftc.gov) or 1-877-382-4357.

Have questions? Call the Cuyahoga County Scam Squad at 216-443-7035