



Taxpayers Can Protect Themselves from Scammers by Knowing How the IRS Communicates



If the IRS does call a taxpayer, it should not be a surprise because the agency will generally send a notice or letter first.

Understanding how the IRS communicates can help taxpayers protect themselves from scammers who pretend to be from the IRS with the goal of stealing personal information.

Here are some facts about how the IRS communicates with taxpayers:

- The IRS doesn't normally initiate contact with taxpayers by email. Do not reply to an email from someone who claims to be from the IRS because the IRS email address could be spoofed or fake. Emails from IRS employees will end in "irs.gov".
- The agency does not send text messages or contact people through social media. Fraudsters will impersonate legitimate government agents and agencies on social media and try to initiate contact with taxpayers.
- When the IRS needs to contact a taxpayer, the first contact is normally by letter delivered by the U.S. Postal Service. Debt relief firms send unsolicited tax debt relief offers through the mail. Fraudsters will often claim they already notified the taxpayer by U.S. mail.
- Depending on the situation, IRS employees may first call or visit with a taxpayer. In some instances, the IRS sends a letter or written notice to a taxpayer in advance, but not always. Taxpayers can search IRS notices by visiting '*Understanding Your IRS Notice or Letter*'. However, not all IRS notices are searchable on that site and just because someone references an IRS notice in an email, phone call, text, or social media, does not mean the request is legitimate.
- IRS revenue agents or tax compliance officers may call a taxpayer or tax professional after mailing a notice to confirm an appointment or to discuss items for a scheduled audit. The IRS encourages taxpayers to review, '*How to Know it's Really the IRS Calling or Knocking on Your Door: Collection*'.
- Private debt collectors can call taxpayers for the collection of certain outstanding inactive tax liabilities, but only after the taxpayer and their representative have received written notice. Private debt collection should not be confused with debt relief firms who will call, send lien notices via U.S. mail, or email taxpayers with debt relief offers. Taxpayers should contact the IRS regarding filing back taxes properly.
- IRS revenue officers and agents routinely make unannounced visits to a taxpayer's home or place of business to discuss taxes owed, delinquent tax returns or a business falling behind on payroll tax deposits. IRS revenue officers will request payment of taxes owed by the taxpayer. However, taxpayers should remember that payment will never be requested to a source other than the U.S. Treasury.
- When visited by someone from the IRS, the taxpayers should always ask for credentials. IRS representatives can always provide two forms of official credentials: a pocket commission and a '*Personal Identity Verification Credential*'.

Cite: IRS Tax Tip, Issue Number: Tax Tip 2021-124, August 24, 2021.

 **Check out and Subscribe to our Backbone Planning YouTube Channel!** 

Backbone Planning Partners
7477 W Lake Mead Blvd Ste 230, Las Vegas, NV 89128
(702) 569-7316

See How Financially & Mentally Ready You Are To Inevitably Leave Your Business:



Backbone Planning Partners
7477 W Lake Mead Blvd, Suite 230 • Las Vegas, NV 89128
702-569-7316
www.backboneplanning.com
landon.mance@lfg.com; austin.peterson@lfg.com

Austin Peterson & Landon Mance
Financial Planners

Please email christina.johnson@lfg.com if you'd like to be removed from this mailing list.

Lincoln Financial Advisors Corp. and its representatives do not provide legal or tax advice. You may want to consult a legal or tax advisor regarding any legal or tax information as it relates to your personal circumstances. Landon Mance and Austin Peterson are registered representatives of Lincoln Financial Advisors Corp. Securities and investment advisory services offered through Lincoln Advisors Corp., a broker-dealer (member SIPC) and a registered investment advisor. Insurance offered through Lincoln affiliates and other fine companies. Backbone Planning Partners is a marketing name for registered representatives of Lincoln Financial Advisors Corp. CRN-3797925-092821

