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get personal information from victims.

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The Internal Revenue Service is warning of scammers posing as IRS employees to get personal information from victims.

“These crooks make detailed efforts to try and scam you out of divulging personal information — including checking account numbers and other types of bank account information,” Clay Sanford, an IRS spokesman, said in a statement. “Don't fall victim to these misleading attempts to steal your identity and hard-earned cash.”

Victims might be told they owe money to the IRS. In many cases, the caller becomes aggressive and insulting. If the victim refuses to cooperate, they may be threatened with arrest, deportation or suspension of a business or driver's license.

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 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.

“If there's an issue with your federal taxes, you'll initially receive a letter or notice in the mail from the IRS. Don't fall for scam artists on the internet or over the telephone,” representatives said. “Real IRS employees have badge numbers. Ask the caller for his or her badge number, and then call 1-800-829-1040 to confirm it. Sometimes the caller may brazenly volunteer a fake badge number before you even ask for one.”

Scammers may be able to recite the last four digits of a victim's Social Security

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If you know you don't owe taxes or have no reason to think that you owe any taxes, call and report the incident to the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration at 1-800-366-4484. If you've been targeted by this scam, you should contact the Federal Trade Commission at [FTC.gov](https://www.ftc.gov).

The IRS also warned of unrelated scams, such as a lottery sweepstakes and solicitations, such as debt relief, that fraudulently claim to be from the IRS.

“It doesn't have to be tax season to fall prey to one of these scams — unfortunately, they happen during other times of year as well,” Sanford said. “To be safe — always be alert to phone and email scams that use the IRS as a lure.”

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