

How to Report and Identify Phishing, E-mail Scams, and Fake IRS Websites

Phishing

Phishing is a tactic used by scam artists to trick unsuspecting victims into revealing personal or financial information online. IRS impersonation [schemes](#) flourish during the filing season and can take the form of e-mails, tweets, or phony Websites. Scammers may also use phones and faxes to reach their victims.

Scam artists will try to mislead consumers by telling them they are entitled to a tax refund from the IRS and that they must reveal personal information to claim it. Criminals use the information they get to [steal the victim's identity](#), access bank accounts, run up credit card charges or apply for loans in the victim's name.

[Taxpayers who receive suspicious e-mails](#) claiming to come from the IRS should not open any attachments or click on any of the links in the e-mail. Suspicious e-mails claiming to be from the IRS or Web addresses that do not begin with <http://www.irs.gov> should be forwarded to the IRS mailbox: phishing@irs.gov.

The IRS does not initiate taxpayer communications through e-mail.

- **The IRS does not request detailed personal information through e-mail.**
- The IRS does not send e-mail requesting your PIN numbers, passwords or similar access information for credit cards, banks or other financial accounts.
- Report suspicious e-mails and fake IRS Websites to phishing@irs.gov.

If you receive an e-mail from someone claiming to be the IRS or directing you to an IRS site,

- Do not reply.
- Do not open any attachments. Attachments may contain malicious code that will infect your computer.
- Do not click on any links. If you clicked on links in a suspicious e-mail or phishing Web site and entered confidential information, visit our [Identity Theft page](#).
- Use the following steps to report the e-mail or bogus Web site to the IRS.

How to report phishing, e-mail scams, and fake IRS Websites

If you receive an e-mail or find a Website you think is pretending to be the IRS,

- *Forward* the e-mail or Website URL to the IRS at phishing@irs.gov.
- You can forward the message as received or provide the [Internet header](#) of the e-mail. The Internet header has additional information to help us locate the sender.
- After you forward the e-mail or header information to us, delete the message.

How to identify phishing, e-mail scams, and bogus IRS Websites

- Sample of phishing e-mails
 - [First sample of an actual phishing e-mail](#) - PDF
 - [Second sample of an actual phishing e-mail](#) - PDF
- All IRS.gov Web page addresses begin with, **http://www.irs.gov/**.
 - [Is it a phishing Website?](#) - PDF
- Are you a victim of Identity Theft?
 - Contact the [Federal Trade Commission](#) at 1-877-IDTHEFT (438-4338)
 - Visit the [IRS Identity Theft resource page](#)

You may also report misuse of the IRS name, logo, forms or other IRS property to the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration toll-free at 1-800-366-4484.