

Beware of Phone Scams!

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Protect yourself and your hard-earned money!

The work of scammers is constantly evolving. Each year, we at Global Law Advocates hear stories from our clients about the inventive—and sometimes aggressive—ways that criminals try to trick people into sending them money. Many scammers pretend to be from the taxing authority of the federal government, called Internal Revenue Service (IRS) or from the immigration service, either Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).



One of our clients recently received a call from someone claiming to be from the IRS. The caller told our client that there was a problem with her taxes, and she needed to pay nearly \$2,000 immediately. The caller also told our client that if she didn't pay the money right away, she would be arrested. Our client thought the call was very suspicious, since she hadn't received anything in the mail from the IRS, and she hung up the phone. Just a few minutes later, her phone rang again, this time showing the phone number of the Tacoma Police Department! Our client answered, and a man told her that he was a police officer, and he was coming to arrest her. Strangely, however, he asked our client to verify her address, so he could find her. Our client knew that this was not normal behavior from the police, so she hung up and called our office. She had just avoided becoming the victim of a phone scam.

The IRS is aware of these scams and has detailed information on its website about what to avoid and how to report fraudulent activity. Remember, the IRS will **NEVER**:

- ⊗ Call to demand immediate payment using a specific payment method such as a prepaid debit card, gift card or wire transfer.
- ⊗ Threaten to bring in local police or other law-enforcement groups such as ICE to have you arrested or deported for not paying.
- ⊗ Demand payment without giving you the opportunity to question or appeal the amount they say you owe.
- ⊗ Ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone.

If you receive a call from someone claiming to be from the IRS, ICE or USCIS, asking for money or your personal information, it's a scam. Do not give them personal details like your social security number or tax identification number, and NEVER send money. Neither the IRS, ICE, or USCIS will call asking for payments or personal information. If you do get such a call, please report it to your local police department.

But what about the call our client received from the Tacoma Police Department? Unfortunately, it's easy for scammers to alter caller ID to make it look like they're calling from any number they choose, even a local law enforcement office. Don't be fooled!

If you believe you've been a target or a victim of a tax scam, you can report it to the IRS by following the instructions posted here: <https://www.irs.gov/individuals/how-do-you-report-suspected-tax-fraud-activity>

Remember, never give money or personal information to someone over the phone, unless you're certain that you're speaking to someone you trust.

For appointments call 206-774-8758 or email
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