

Don't get scammed this tax season!

January 11, 2019

Companies are required by the IRS to distribute W-2 statements to their employees by January 31 in preparation for tax season. Cyber criminals use this as an opportunistic time to steal your identity by posing as a trusted source asking you to validate your SSN or other tax information.

Keep your identity safe this tax season by remaining vigilant for possible scammers asking for personal information and claiming to be from trusted sources like HR, tax professionals, the IRS or law enforcement.

The IRS primary method of contact is via regular mail delivered by the United States Postal Service. Occasionally they may call, but this would be after sending multiple letters regarding delinquent taxes. The IRS doesn't call taxpayers with threats of lawsuits or arrests.

Follow these tips to protect your identity from cyber criminals:

Don't:

- Open attachments or click on links in suspicious emails or text messages.
- Provide personal information if you haven't initiated the contact - even if they appear to be from a trusted source.
- Don't prepare or file your taxes while using public Wi-Fi.

Do:

- Find the official website or phone number and reach out to confirm if the request is valid.
- File your taxes early, if possible, before identity thieves file a return for you.
- Keep your antivirus up to date and install software updates regularly on your devices

You can find additional information for protecting your identity at <https://www.irs.gov/identity-theft-fraud-scams>.