



SEASIDE POLICE DEPARTMENT

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*Honor, Pride, and Commitment*

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## PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

### TELEPHONE SCAM - INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE

Seaside, CA  
February 15, 2017

The Seaside Police Department would like you to be aware of a common telephone scam: If you answer your phone and receive an automated recording advising you that you owe the IRS money, hang up immediately. The caller may tell you that you owe the IRS money and will be jailed if you do not pay.

The Internal Revenue Service warns consumers about a sophisticated phone scam targeting taxpayers, including recent immigrants, throughout the country.

Victims are told they owe money to the IRS and it must be paid promptly through a pre-loaded debit card or wire transfer. If the victim refuses to cooperate, they are then threatened with arrest, deportation or suspension of a business or driver's license. In many cases, the caller becomes hostile and insulting.

According to the Internal Revenue Service this scam has hit taxpayers in nearly every state in the country. The Seaside Police Department and the Internal Revenue Service want to educate taxpayers so they can help protect themselves.

The Internal Revenue Service will not ask for credit card numbers over the phone or request a pre-paid debit card or wire transfers.

#### **Important information regarding this scam:**

- **Scammers may be able to recite the last four digits of a victim's Social Security Number.**
- **Scammers spoof the IRS toll-free number on caller ID to make it appear that it's the IRS calling.**
- **Scammers sometimes send bogus IRS emails to some victims to support their bogus calls.**
- **Victims hear background noise of other calls being conducted to mimic a call site.**
- **After threatening victims with jail time or driver's license revocation, scammers hang up and others soon call back pretending to be from the local police or DMV, and the caller ID supports their claim.**

If you get a phone call or recording from someone claiming to be from the IRS, here's what you should do:

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If you know you owe taxes or you think you might owe taxes, call the IRS at 1.800.829.1040. The IRS employees at that line can help you with a payment issue – if there really is such an issue.

If you know you don't owe taxes or have no reason to think that you owe any taxes (for example, you've never received a bill or the caller made some threats as described above), call and report the incident to the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration at 1.800.366.4484.

You may also file a complaint using the FTC Complaint Assistant; choose "Other" and then "Imposter Scams." If the complaint involves someone impersonating the IRS, include the words "IRS Telephone Scam" in the notes.

Taxpayers should be aware that there are other unrelated scams (such as a lottery sweepstakes) and solicitations (such as debt relief) that fraudulently claim to be from the IRS.

The IRS and the Seaside Police Department encourage taxpayers to be vigilant against phone and email scams that use the IRS as a lure. 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](mailto:phishing@irs.gov).

More information on how to report phishing scams involving the IRS is available on the genuine IRS website, [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov).

You may also contact the Seaside Police Department or a police department in your jurisdiction should you be the victim of an IRS scam.

**Anonymous Tip-Line** – (831) 899-6282  
**Seaside Police Department** – (831) 899-6748  
**Non-Emergency Dispatch** – (831) 394-6811



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For Immediate Release  
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