

IRS warns about new scam involving bogus 'Federal Student Tax'

Forbes MSN

Just days after the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) [announced the arrests](#) of five individuals made in what has been characterized as an “ongoing investigation” into the scams, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) issued a warning about a new scam making the rounds. The latest IRS impersonation scheme involves bogus phone calls to demanding payment for a non-existent tax, the “Federal Student Tax.”

Here’s all you need to know: There is no such thing as a “Federal Student Tax.”

The lack of such a tax hasn’t kept scammers from targeting students, and threatening to report them to the police if they do not immediately wire money via MoneyGram or other untraceable method. [According to the FTC](#), the callers generally have some piece of information that makes the call seem legit. That information might be the name of the student’s school or info that is designed to make the student feel like the caller is a real authoritative figure. Sometimes, if the student hangs up on the caller, the caller follows up with spoofed caller-ID information advising that 911 or the U.S. government is calling.

It’s all fake. Don’t fall for it.

“These scams and schemes continue to evolve nationwide, and now they’re trying to trick students,” said IRS Commissioner John Koskinen. Koskinen advises taxpayers to “remain vigilant and not fall prey to these aggressive calls demanding immediate payment of a tax supposedly owed.”

This new tactic follows on the heels of a scam advising taxpayers to pay their taxes using iTunes gift cards from Apple. Regardless of how ridiculous the scam sounds, [according to TIGTA](#), at least 328 people paid out a total of \$1.4 million to the scammers using those iTunes gift cards.

Remember that the IRS has [previously confirmed](#) they will not:

- Call to demand immediate payment over the phone, nor will the agency call about taxes owed without first having mailed you several bills.
- Call or email you to verify your identity by asking for personal and financial information.
- Demand that you pay taxes without giving you the opportunity to question or appeal the amount they say you owe.
- Require you to use a specific payment method for your taxes, such as a prepaid debit card.
- Ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone or email.

- Threaten to immediately bring in local police or other law-enforcement groups to have you arrested for not paying.

If you receive such a call and do not owe tax, don't engage with the scammer and do not give out any information. Just hang up.

If you get an email asking you to visit a website or answer personal questions, do not reply and do not click on any links in the email.

If you receive a phone call from someone claiming to be with the IRS, and you owe tax or think you may owe tax, do not give out any information. Call the IRS back at 1.800.829.1040 to find out more information.

You can also contact TIGTA to report scam calls by calling 1.800.366.4484 or by using the "[IRS Impersonation Scam Reporting](#)" form on their website. You may also want to report the scam to the Federal Trade Commission by using the "[FTC Complaint Assistant](#)" to report persons pretending to be from the government; please add "IRS Telephone Scam" in the notes.

Don't fall for the tricks. Keep your personal information safe this tax season by remaining alert.

For tips on protecting yourself from identity theft related tax fraud, [click here](#).

[More on Countrywide Pre-Paid Legal Services](#)