



IRS warns university students and staff of impersonation email scam

IR-2021-68, March 30, 2021

WASHINGTON – The Internal Revenue Service today warned of an ongoing IRS-impersonation scam that appears to primarily target educational institutions, including students and staff who have “edu” email addresses.

The IRS’ phishing@irs.gov has received complaints about the impersonation scam in recent weeks from people with email addresses ending in “.edu.” The phishing emails appear to target university and college students from both public and private, profit and non-profit institutions.

Taxpayers who believe they have a pending refund can easily check on its status at “Where’s My Refund?” on IRS.gov.

The suspect emails display the IRS logo and use various subject lines such as “Tax Refund Payment” or “Recalculation of your tax refund payment.” It asks people to click a link and submit a form to claim their refund.

The phishing website requests taxpayers provide their:

- Social Security Number
- First Name
- Last Name
- Date of Birth
- Prior Year Annual Gross Income (AGI)
- Driver's License Number
- Current Address
- City
- State/U.S. Territory
- ZIP Code/Postal Code
- Electronic Filing PIN

People who receive this scam email should not click on the link in the email, but they can report it to the IRS. For security reasons, save the email using “save as” and then send that attachment to phishing@irs.gov or forward the email as an attachment to phishing@irs.gov. The Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) and IRS Criminal Investigation have been notified.

Taxpayers who believe they may have provided identity thieves with this information should consider immediately obtaining an [Identity Protection PIN](#). This is a voluntary opt-in program. An IP PIN is a six-digit number that helps prevent identity thieves from filing fraudulent tax returns in the victim’s name.

Taxpayers who attempt to e-file their tax return and find it rejected because a return with their SSN already has been filed should file a [Form 14039](#), Identity Theft Affidavit, to report themselves as a possible identity theft victim. See [Identity Theft Central](#) to learn about the signs of identity theft and actions to take.