

News Release

CONTACT Ryan Brown
PHONE 651-556-6750
E-MAIL ryan.brown@state.mn.us

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Contact: Ryan Brown

ryan.brown@state.mn.us

Department of Revenue reminds taxpayers to be aware of scams; criminals may attempt refund fraud using stolen identities

ST. PAUL, Minn. –With 44 days left in the income tax filing season, the Minnesota Department of Revenue is reminding taxpayers that criminals may attempt to commit income tax refund fraud using stolen identities. Fighting refund fraud is one of the department’s top priorities.

The Internal Revenue Service and the department have recently warned of an increase in email, text message, and over-the-phone phishing scams that trick taxpayers into giving criminals personal information that they may then use to file a fraudulent tax return. As more and more identities are stolen and used for unlawful purposes, the department has taken steps to protect Minnesota taxpayers, their refunds, and the state’s general fund from criminals.

“We understand that many Minnesotans rely on their refunds and we are working as quickly as we can to review returns for accuracy and for potential refund fraud through identity theft,” said Commissioner of Revenue Cynthia Bauerly. “Unfortunately, criminals are now using stolen identity information to file tax returns under a victim’s name. We are committed to making sure the right refund goes to the right person.”

The department continues to receive and process returns, and issues thousands of refunds every day. Each tax return is different and the department reviews all returns to verify the information to make sure that the right refund goes to the right person. As more and more identities are stolen and used for unlawful purposes, the department needs to take steps to protect Minnesota taxpayers and their refunds – and the state’s general fund – from criminals. In this environment of identity theft and fraud, there is no longer any such thing as a simple return. Protecting taxpayer refunds from thieves means that some returns could take longer to process than in prior years.

Taxpayers should know that neither the department nor the IRS will ever ask them to provide, update, or verify personal information through unsolicited emails or phone calls; nor will they threaten to send law enforcement to a taxpayer’s house if a debt is not paid immediately, as scammers often claim. You can learn more about scams, steps to prevent identity theft, and the department’s fraud prevention efforts on [our website](#).

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