

Tax Scam Alert: Phone calls from IRS or SSA



❖ **IRS ALERT:** The IRS does not send unsolicited email, text messages or use social media to discuss your personal tax issues. If you receive a telephone call from someone claiming to be an IRS employee and demanding money, you should consult the IRS Tax Scams/Consumer Alerts webpage:

<http://www.irs.gov/uac/Tax-Scams-Consumer-Alerts>.

If you know you don't owe taxes or have no reason to believe that you do, report the incident to the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) at 1.800.366.4484 or at www.tigta.gov.

❖ **The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) is warning** people to be on the lookout for suspicious calls that claim to be from the Social Security Administration. Scammers are ramping up their efforts to steal Social Security numbers to use in filing fraudulent tax returns.



How the Scam Works

You answer the phone, and it's someone alleging to be from the Social Security Administration (SSA) or another government entity. The name on your caller ID may even support that claim. The caller says your social security number (SSN) has been used to fraudulently apply for a credit card or commit another crime. In order to fix the situation, the caller needs you to confirm your SSN and other personal information. If you don't cooperate, the caller threatens to take you to court or have your Social Security number blocked or revoked.

No matter the details, the stories are designed to induce fear. Scammers hope that under pressure you will provide them your SSN and other sensitive personal information. Scammers can use your SSN to commit identity theft and file tax returns in your name to steal your refund.

How to Avoid the Scam

- **Never give personal information to unsolicited callers.** If someone contacts you without your permission, refuse to tell them any personal information.
- **Remember, the SSA will never call you asking for your Social Security number.** They will never ask you to pay anything, nor will they threaten your benefits.
- **Don't trust your caller ID.** The internet has made it possible for scammers to use fake caller IDs when they call your home. If you receive a suspicious call, don't make any important decisions based on what your caller ID says.
- **Contact the Social Security Administration:** If you are concerned about a call you received from someone who claims to be with the SSA, you can call the real SSA at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).

Please contact your Community Service Officer with your questions or suggestions.

Neighborhood Watch (Bearcreek and Valley Oak)

CSO *Debbie Lopez*

Phone: 209-937-8796. Email: Debbie.Lopez@stocktonca.gov

Neighborhood Watch (Civic and Lakeview)

CSO *Patricia Sinor*

Phone: 209-937-7258. Email: Patricia.Sinor@stocktonca.gov

Neighborhood Watch (Seaport and Park)

CSO *Phillip Andeola*

Phone: 209-937-5408. Email: Phillip.Andeola@stocktonca.gov

Business Watch (Citywide)

CSO *Andrea Castro*

Phone: 209-937-5479. Email: Andrea.Castro@stocktonca.gov

Stockton Crime Free Multi-Housing Program

CSO *Sy Truong*

Phone: 209-937-7255. Email: Sy.Truong@stocktonca.gov