

SCAM ALERT: Government Imposters



Arizona Attorney General
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Scam at a glance:

Scammers attempt to exploit the authority of government agencies in an effort to trick consumers into giving them money, personal information, or both. These endeavors are typically threatening and demanding.

Common ruses include the IRS scam, often demanding payment for back taxes. Or the jury duty scam, where cheats impersonate court employees to collect a fee from the person for failing to show up for jury duty.

Warning Signs:

- Being threatened with arrest or lawsuit if you do not immediately pay a tax, debt, fine, or fee.
- Demanding you provide a debit card number, wire transfer, or purchase a gift card for payment.
- Receiving a phone call or voice mail from a domestic or foreign government agency telling you that you owe money or to call back immediately.

Protect Yourself:

- Be skeptical if someone calls you claiming to be a government entity and claims you owe money.
- When contacting an agency directly, verify the number on the phone call, letter, or email on the agency website.
- Ask the caller to provide their name and employee number, and then call the agency directly to verify that information (using a number found through a search engine, not a number provided by the caller).
- Don't assume official looking literature is legitimate. Read the fine print and contact the agency directly.
- Do not be influenced or threatened to pay money immediately.
- Do not give out or confirm personal information unless you know who you are dealing with.
- Government agencies do not ask people to wire money, pay with a prepaid debit card, or purchase gift cards.

Resources:

Arizona Attorney General's Office

www.azag.gov/complaints/consumer

Phoenix: (602) 542 - 5763, Tucson: (520) 628 - 6648

or Toll-free: (800) 352 - 8431

Task Force Against Senior Abuse Helpline

(602) 542 - 2124 or (844) 894 - 4735

Federal Trade Commission

www.ftc.gov or (877) 382 - 4357

www.azag.gov/seniors/scamalert