



Preventing Medicare Fraud

February 2024 Fraud Prevention Fact

It is income tax time, and that gives the Missouri SMP (Senior Medicare Patrol) one more reason to remind you about scammers. The scam artists might be coming at you with emails, phone calls and snail mail this tax season. Be ready.

The Internal Revenue Service recently warned of a surge of fraudulent emails impersonating the IRS and trying to entice users to open documents containing malware. The malware masqueraded as the IRS, pretending to be from “IRS Online.” The IRS does NOT send unsolicited emails to the public, and the IRS will NOT email sensitive documents. Do NOT open such an email. DELETE it.

If you are going to file a tax return, do so as soon as possible to keep an imposter from doing it using your information.

The IRS also will not initiate contact with you by phone, text messages, Facebook or Twitter to request personal or financial information.

Scammers claim to be IRS employees and may change their caller ID’s so that it looks like the IRS is calling. They tell you that you owe money that needs to be paid either by a gift card or wire transfer. DO NOT do it. They may threaten to have you arrested. They may tell you they are going to suspend your driver’s license. They can be intimidating. These threats are NOT for real.

They may tell you that you have a refund coming, but ONLY if you provide your banking information for a direct transfer. DO NOT fall for it. The IRS does NOT demand immediate payment using a prepaid debit card, gift card or wire transfer. If you were to owe taxes, you would receive a bill in the mail. NO ONE is coming to arrest you.

As always, report suspected Medicare fraud to the Missouri SMP at 1-888-515-6565.