

Avoid COVID-19 Relief Scams

Key points:

-Multiple federal agencies have issued warnings to taxpayers cautioning them to be aware of potential scams related to coronavirus relief checks.

-Scams can come in the form of emails, text messages, websites, and social media attempts. Red flags to look for include requests for money or personal taxpayer information.

-“The IRS isn't going to call you asking to verify or provide your financial information so you can get an economic impact payment or your refund faster,” said IRS Commissioner Chuck Rettig.

The details:

The federal government is offering expanded financial assistance to Americans as we work to defeat the novel coronavirus. Unfortunately, scammers don't sleep – even in the face of a global pandemic.

To help taxpayers avoid falling victim to one of these scams, multiple federal agencies – from the [Internal Revenue Service](#), [Department of Health and Human Services](#), to the [Social Security Administration](#) – have issued warnings. Here are some common red flags to look for, courtesy of the IRS:

Scammers may:

- Emphasize the words “Stimulus Check” or “Stimulus Payment.” Those are incorrect. **The official term is economic impact payment.**
- Ask the taxpayer to sign over their economic impact payment check to them.
- Ask by phone, email, text, or social media for verification of personal and/or banking information saying that the information is needed to receive or speed up their economic impact payment.
- Suggest that they can get a tax refund or economic impact payment faster by working on the taxpayer's behalf. This scam could be conducted by social media or even in person.
- Mail the taxpayer a bogus check, perhaps in an odd amount, then tell the taxpayer to call a number or verify information online in order to cash it.

Want to read more on the fight against Coronavirus? Read our [Coronavirus Bulletin here](#) which contains our extensive [FAQ about recent federal actions](#), including our [FAQ on types of fraud scams](#).