



## IRS IMPERSONATION SCAM

### WARNING:

#### WHAT?

Individuals impersonating Internal Revenue Service (IRS) employees are making unsolicited threatening telephone calls to taxpayers. They use the threat of arrest to obtain money from victims by falsely representing that the victims owe back taxes or other fees. The perpetrators demand that the victims send them money via iTunes cards, other prepaid debit cards, money orders, or wire transfers from their banks.

#### WHO?

The perpetrators are individuals who falsely claim to be IRS employees and tell intended victims they owe taxes and must pay using an iTunes card, other pre-paid debit card, money order, or wire transfer. Some of them are in the United States; however, there is a strong international component to this crime as well.

#### WHEN/WHERE?

Since October 2013, TIGTA has received reports of these fraudulent calls in every State in the country. The perpetrators are calling with multiple caller IDs from around the world. The top five States with the most losses are: (1) California – more than \$10 million; (2) New York – more than \$4 million; (3) Texas – more than \$4 million; (4) Illinois – more than \$3 million; and (5) Florida – more than \$2 million.<sup>1</sup>

#### ABOUT US

The Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) was established in 1999, as an independent agency that provides oversight of the IRS, and reports directly to the Treasury Secretary. We audit, investigate and inspect the IRS and the Federal tax system in order to ensure that the IRS is accountable for the trillions of dollars in revenue that it collects each year. We protect the integrity of the system and save taxpayers millions of dollars each year. For every dollar invested in TIGTA, taxpayers receive \$168<sup>2</sup> in savings.

#### WHAT TO DO?

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**First, hang up! Do not engage with these callers.** If you owe Federal taxes, or think you might owe taxes, hang up and call the IRS at 800-829-1040. IRS workers can help you with your payment questions.

If you do not owe taxes, fill out the “IRS Impersonation scam” form on TIGTA’s website, [www.tigta.gov](http://www.tigta.gov) or call TIGTA at **800-366-4484**. You can also file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission at [www.FTC.gov](http://www.FTC.gov). Add “IRS Telephone Scam” to the comments in your complaint.

<sup>1</sup> Data are from Oct. 2013 to Nov. 1, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> TIGTA, *Overall Performance Report FY 2015* (September 15, 2015)