



FORT SILL LEGAL ASSISTANCE



PROTECT YOUR IDENTITY: TAXPAYER ID THEFT

Over the past decade, there has been a noticeable increase in fraudulent activity concerning attempts to gain and misuse taxpayer identification and personal information. The most common form of identity theft comes from “phishing,” a scam that is usually carried out through an unsolicited email or letter posed as a legitimate request for personal or financial information from an unsuspecting victim.

A common form of “phishing” comes in the form of a written letter that a taxpayer is supposedly receiving from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). In this letter, the IRS claims to have received your virtually filed tax return but needs you to respond with additional information. In this instance, it is best to contact the IRS directly through the telephone number listed on their website www.irs.gov to confirm the mail as legitimate. If after speaking with an official IRS representative that the letter is authentic, then it would be safe to release your personal information over the phone. However, if the IRS has no record of requesting information from you via letter, then do **not** reply to the sender with your personal information.

It is also important to remember that the IRS will **never** initiate communication with taxpayers via email or text message. If you receive an email from a source claiming to be the IRS that contains a request for additional personal information, the IRS advises taxpayers not to open or download any attachments to it. In addition, do not reply to the email itself or click on any links that might be included in the body of the email. The IRS suggests forwarding the suspicious email to their website directly at phishing@irs.gov and then deleting the email from your personal accounts, after initially contacting the IRS directly to confirm if any additional information is needed from you personally.

The Fort Sill Legal Assistance Office is available to assist with tax related questions concerning any requests for personal information or communication that you might have received from the IRS.

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This Information Paper provides only basic information and is not intended to serve as a substitute for personal consultation with a Legal Assistance Attorney. To schedule an appointment with a Legal Assistance Attorney, please contact the Legal Assistance Office at (580) 442-5058. The Fort Sill Legal Assistance Office is located on the 4th Floor of Building 4700 (Welcome Center) at 4700 Mow-Way Road, Fort Sill, Oklahoma 73503.