



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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CDOR Reminds Taxpayers of Secure Communication Channels in Age of Identity Theft

DENVER-Friday, Jan. 26, 2018 - To help prevent identity theft, the Colorado Department of Revenue (CDOR) would like to remind taxpayers of the communication channels the Department uses to contact them regarding their tax account. Taxpayers should take steps to protect their personally identifiable information due to high rates of identity theft nationwide. If a taxpayer receives a phone call, email or letter regarding Colorado taxes that does not align with the following CDOR procedures, it might be a scam and the taxpayer should not release any sensitive information to the inquiring party.

Identity theft does not happen when you file your tax return. The theft occurred before you filed, and the fraudster is using that information to claim your tax refund. Criminals have access to an incredible amount of personal data from business and financial sources.

What scams should I be aware of?

Telephone

Beware of phone scams referencing a tax filing or tax payment. If you get a call from an aggressive or belligerent person who says you will be sued or jailed if you don't make an immediate payment, know this: that person is a fraudster. If CDOR contacts taxpayers by phone about their Colorado tax account, Department staff will provide their name and office name. CDOR does not contact taxpayers over the phone requesting credit card numbers to pay an outstanding tax balance.

Email

Beware of phishing emails during income tax season. A link may take you to a fake website that is designed to steal your log-on information. The attachment you open may include a program that allows a thief to get into your sensitive information. CDOR does not initiate contact with taxpayers by email requesting account details or financial information.

How does the Department communicate with me?

The Department will send written notification through a series of letters mailed to the taxpayer's address. Some letters from the Department direct taxpayers to mail or fax the requested information to CDOR. It is understandable that taxpayers may worry that these are not legitimate requests from

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the Department. For an example of an official correspondence from CDOR, please click on the Refund Security button at Colorado.gov/Tax, the Taxation Division's website. The following are possible documents or information the Department may request in support of a Colorado tax refund:

- Copy of Driver License or ID
- Copy of a document containing your name and address
- Copy of W-2s and/or 1099s claiming Colorado tax withholding
- Refund amount
- Validation Key

How can I communicate electronically with the Department?

Revenue Online, CDOR's free online filing system at Colorado.gov/RevenueOnline, remains the fastest, safest and most secure means to upload requested supporting tax documents to CDOR. CDOR's accounting system and the public-facing Revenue Online service have not been impacted by data security breaches. In order to verify financial information with the Department, a taxpayer is required to log onto Revenue Online. Any messages submitted through Revenue Online between the Department and the taxpayer are secure. Responses between the taxpayer and the Department occur within the Revenue Online service.

The Department has employed the "two-factor" authentication industry standard when taxpayers sign up to access their tax accounts in Revenue Online as a means to prevent the personal and tax information the Department has from getting into the wrong hands. Due to security measures, Revenue Online is not available to taxpayers who are filing Colorado taxes for the first time.

If a taxpayer receives a letter, telephone call or email message telling them state tax is owed and they are suspicious about the party who is making the contact, they may report it to CDOR's Criminal Tax Investigation section by visiting Colorado.gov/Tax/criminal-investigations and submitting a Citizen Informant Report.

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The Colorado Department of Revenue's Taxation Division is committed to protecting personal taxpayer information and providing quality customer service to assist in voluntary compliance with state tax laws. It is the Taxation Division's objective to effectively, efficiently and elegantly communicate tax law and taxpayer responsibilities to the public, tax professionals, local governments and other stakeholders. The Department partners with the IRS, other state revenue departments and tax professionals to combat refund fraud.