

Taxpayer Alert

ALERT

Don't be fooled by unsolicited e-mails or phone calls!

The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) is warning the public to beware of a number of e-mail and telephone scams in which individuals falsely identify themselves as officials from the CRA or the Department of Finance Canada.

There are many versions of the scam, but the general concept remains the same: the victim receives an unsolicited phone call from an individual claiming to be a government official or an e-mail from a legitimate-sounding generic e-mail account that appears to come from a government organization.

Typically, the scams would look like this:

1. You receive an unsolicited e-mail or phone call promising you a significant amount of money, in the form of a lottery or sweepstakes jackpot, or a tax refund.
2. To receive the promised money, you are asked to provide either an upfront deposit or confidential banking information, such as credit card or bank account numbers and passwords.
3. You are then told that someone will get back to you with the promised payout, which doesn't happen.
4. When you try to recover the money, you find that the individual who contacted you has disappeared or never gives you a straight answer.

Do not, under any circumstances, respond to any unsolicited e-mail or telephone call asking you for money or confidential banking information. Instead, immediately contact your local police department or the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Here are a few tips to avoid being a victim of such a scam:

1. Does the e-mail contain several noticeable typos or spelling and grammatical errors? If it does, you're probably dealing with a scam. The CRA employs technology and people to ensure there are minimal errors in its communications with taxpayers.
2. Does the letterhead in the documents look out of focus or unclear? The CRA has very strict guidelines regarding the creation of letterhead and the use of its corporate identifiers. If you are unsure, compare with documents you received in previous dealings with the CRA.



3. Are you asked to make a deposit into a bank account registered to an individual? The Government of Canada does not use personal bank accounts for the purpose of receiving payments and all tax debts are payable exclusively to the Receiver General for Canada.
4. Still not sure? Call the CRA at 1-800-959-8281 to find out whether the information you have been provided is correct.
5. The Department of Finance Canada does not communicate with individuals about tax matters. Only the CRA is authorized to communicate with taxpayers about their individual tax files, and it normally does so by traditional mail, unless otherwise permitted by the taxpayer in question.

For more information about this and other fraud schemes, or to report deceptive telemarketing activity, visit **www.phonebusters.com**, send an e-mail to **info@phonebusters.com**, or call 1-888-495-8501 (toll free).

Related Documents:

- **Department of Finance Canada E-mail Fraud Alert**
- **Taxpayer Alert: You do not have to pay taxes or fees to the CRA on lottery or sweepstakes winnings!**

For media information:
Ariane Boyer
613-954-7928 (Ottawa)