

Philip L. Liberatore, IRS & Tax Expert, Warns Taxpayers About the 2025 'Dirty Dozen' Scams

Understanding and avoiding the most common tax scams can save time, money, and peace of mind.

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, April 1, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As the tax filing deadline approaches, IRS tax expert and founder of [Liberatore CPA](#), [Philip L. Liberatore](#), cautions taxpayers to stay vigilant against scams that could lead to financial loss or identity theft. "Scammers become more sophisticated every year, and tax season is a prime time for fraud," says Liberatore. "Taxpayers must protect themselves by verifying sources, avoiding suspicious messages, and working only with reputable tax preparers."

The IRS "Dirty Dozen" list highlights the most common tax scams to watch out for this year.

Top Tax Scams to Avoid in 2025:

1. Email Phishing & Smishing Scams:

~ Scammers send fake emails (phishing) or text messages (smishing), pretending to be the IRS. These messages often claim that urgent action is needed to avoid penalties or loss of benefits.

Liberatore's Advice:

"Never click on suspicious links or provide personal information. If you receive an unexpected email or text claiming to be from the IRS, verify it directly at [IRS.gov](#) instead of trusting the message."

2. Bad Social Media Tax Advice:

~ Misinformation spreads quickly on platforms like TikTok, leading taxpayers to make costly filing errors. Some bad advice may even encourage fraudulent filings.



Liberatore's Advice:

"Be careful where you get your tax information. Always rely on trusted sources like the IRS website or a licensed tax professional, not viral social media posts."

3. Fake IRS Individual Online Account Assistance:

~ Scammers pose as "helpful" third parties offering to set up IRS online accounts. This allows them to steal Social Security numbers and other sensitive data.

Liberatore's Advice:

"Only set up your IRS account through IRS.gov. Never let a third party create or access your account, as they could steal your personal and financial information."

4. Fake Charities Targeting Donations:

~ Fraudsters create fake charities during disasters to steal donations. Taxpayers attempting to claim deductions for these contributions may face IRS scrutiny.

Liberatore's Advice:

"Before donating, always verify the charity's legitimacy through the IRS Tax-Exempt Organization Search. Be wary of unsolicited requests for donations, especially on social media."

5. False Fuel Tax Credit Claims:

~ Some taxpayers are misled into filing for a fuel tax credit that applies only to off-highway business and farming use.

Liberatore's Advice:

"Make sure you understand the qualifications for tax credits before filing. If you're unsure, check the IRS guidelines or consult a tax professional."

6. Bogus Self-Employment Tax Credits:

~ Scammers promote a fake "Self-Employment Tax Credit" with promises of thousands in refunds.

Liberatore's Advice:

"If a tax credit sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Verify all credits through the IRS or a trusted tax preparer before claiming them."

7. Fake Household Employee Claims:

~ Taxpayers falsely claim household employees to receive extra tax benefits.

Liberatore's Advice:

"Honesty is key when filing taxes. Reporting false information can result in penalties, audits, or even legal trouble."

8. Overstated Withholding Scam:

~ Scammers encourage taxpayers to submit false W-2 or 1099 forms to inflate refunds. The IRS holds refunds for further review if wages and withholding amounts don't match employer reports.

Liberatore's Advice:

"Always report income and withholdings accurately. If the IRS detects false information, your refund could be delayed or denied."

9. Misleading Offers in Compromise (OIC) Scams:

~ Some companies falsely promise to reduce tax debt through an "Offer in Compromise." This service may be unnecessary and cost taxpayers thousands in fees.

Liberatore's Advice:

"You can check your eligibility for an Offer in Compromise directly through the IRS for free. Don't fall for high-pressure sales tactics from companies that promise to erase your tax debt."

10. Ghost Tax Return Preparers:

Some fraudulent tax preparers refuse to sign returns, leaving taxpayers responsible for any issues.

Liberatore's Advice:

"Always work with a tax preparer who has a valid Preparer Tax Identification Number (PTIN). Never sign a blank return, and make sure your preparer signs your tax forms."

11. New Client Scams & Spear Phishing:

~ Cybercriminals target tax professionals with phishing emails that appear to be from new clients. Clicking on malicious attachments or links can lead to data theft.

Liberatore's Advice:

"Tax professionals should always verify client requests before responding. Be cautious of unexpected emails with attachments or links."

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