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April is National Financial Literacy Month: Beware these Common Tax Season Scams

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With this year's tax deadline looming and April marking National Financial Literacy Month, New Yorkers are being urged avoid falling victim to reported tax season scams.

In an effort to help avoid these scams, the Attorney General's Office offers the following tips:

- The IRS and legitimate government agencies never demand payment by phone;
- If you owe money, you will receive a legitimate notice in writing that identifies the agency and the reason you owe money;
- Do not give out personal information, including your Social Security number or bank account information, to telephone callers;
- Legitimate government organizations will never threaten arrest or deportation for failure to pay a debt;
- Legitimate government agencies will never insist that consumers pay a debt only via a pre-paid credit card.

The following suggestions will help consumers file their tax returns safely and keep more of their return:

- If you use a tax-preparation service, use only established and recognizable companies;
- Check the tax preparer's qualifications and history through the Better Business Bureau (bbb.org);
- Ask for a written estimate of all fees; avoid those who base their fees on a percentage of your refund;
- Make sure the tax preparer is accessible, even after the April due date;
- Never sign a blank return;
- Review entire return before signing;
- Make sure the preparer signs the tax form and includes a Preparer Tax Identification Number (PTIN);
- Consult New York's "Consumer Bill of Rights Regarding Tax Preparers."

For more information, click [here](#).