



AI-Fueled Tax Scams on the Rise: LifeLock Experts Share Tips on How to File Safely

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Look out for W-2 phishing scams, disaster relief scams and fake debt relief scams

TEMPE, Ariz. and PRAGUE, Feb. 25, 2025 /PRNewswire/ -- As AI-driven scams surge this tax season, taxpayers face unprecedented challenges in safeguarding their personal and financial information. Taxpayers are increasingly targeted with plausible, highly convincing emails, texts and calls. In one alarming trend, fraudsters use AI-generated voice scams to [impersonate IRS agents](#) or tax professionals with voices and conversation that sound realistic. With the ability to create and widely spread these realistic voice scams, taxpayers have to be vigilant to ensure they don't get tricked by scammers this year. According to a recent study conducted by LifeLock, the leader in identity theft protection in the U.S. and part of Gen™ (NASDAQ: GEN), 56% of individuals have already encountered AI-powered tax scams featuring realistic voices.

"We're in a new era of tax scams, where AI gives fraudsters an unprecedented advantage," notes Ian Bednowitz, General Manager of LifeLock. "The challenge isn't just that these scams exist—it's that they're becoming nearly indistinguishable from legitimate communications. Taxpayers can no longer rely on gut instinct alone to spot a scam. This tax season, the best defense isn't just caution—it's education, verification, and the right security tools to stay ahead of these threats."

In 2024, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Criminal Investigation unit uncovered over [\\$9.1 billion](#) in tax fraud and financial crimes, nearly doubling from \$5.7 billion in 2022, highlighting the widespread threat to taxpayers nationwide. With 81% of people reporting being financially impacted after falling victim to a tax-related scam, these fraudulent schemes continue to pose serious risks. In addition to tax scams commonly seen in past years like ghost tax preparation services and fake tax prep websites, taxpayers also face the following in 2025:

- **[W-2 Phishing Scams](#):** AI-driven phishing scams are more personal and convincing than ever before. Scammers use AI-generated emails, voice deepfakes and even chatbot-assisted conversations to convincingly impersonate senior executives, targeting HR and finance departments. By using AI to tailor their messages with company-specific details, scammers have an easier time than ever making their messages more convincing so they can trick people into handing over sensitive tax documents like W-2s. Fraudsters can file a tax return using a stolen W-2 and steal the refund or take sensitive information on the W-2, such as a Social Security Number, to further steal someone's identity.
- **[Disaster Relief Fund Tax Scams](#):** People typically think of fake donation sites, or insurance related scams after natural disasters, like the recent Los Angeles fires and hurricanes around the country. However, LifeLock sees a rise in scams during tax season too. Fraudsters exploit IRS tax extensions for disaster-affected individuals, impersonating officials to steal sensitive data or payments. The urgency of relief efforts makes both donors and victims particularly vulnerable to these schemes.

- **Offer in Compromise (OIC) Scams:** While the IRS does offer a legitimate program called Offer in Compromise to help taxpayers settle their debts, scammers exploit this by making false promises of debt relief. With the help of AI, fraudsters now deploy large-scale robocalls, personalized email campaigns and even deepfake videos of supposed "tax professionals" endorsing their services. These scams prey on vulnerable people, convincing them to pay high upfront fees for services that never materialize.

Protective Measures for Taxpayers

Cybercriminals are using increasingly sophisticated tactics, making it more critical than ever to stay alert and aware. By following best practices for data protection and relying on trusted tax services, people can strengthen their defenses against these evolving threats.

LifeLock experts recommend the following:

Use Reputable Tax Preparation Services: Ensure your tax preparer has a valid [Preparer Tax Identification Number](#) (PTIN) and is authorized to file returns.

Verify Communications: The IRS will never reach out via email, text or social media to request personal or financial information – but scammers will. In fact, 59% of tax-related scam victims were contacted through email, 50% through text and 47% through social media. If you think the IRS or your tax preparer is trying to reach you, call them directly instead of responding to the message. Better yet, establish a safe word to use with your tax preparer to help make sure it's really them when they reach out to you.

Be Cautious with Personal Information: Avoid sharing sensitive data over the phone or online unless you are certain of the recipient's identity.

Monitor Financial Accounts: Regularly check bank and credit accounts for unauthorized transactions.

Report Suspicious Activity: If you suspect a tax-related scam, report it to the IRS and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) promptly.

Strengthen Your Defenses Against Fraud: Use services like [LifeLock](#) to help monitor and protect against identity theft, particularly during tax season when scammers attempt to file fraudulent returns in your name. Using powerful scam detection like Norton Genie, now included in Norton 360 with LifeLock plans, can help flag potential scams before you fall victim to them.

For more information on how to protect your identity and finances this tax season, please visit <https://lifelock.norton.com/learn/identity-theft-resources/irs-tax-scams-to-watch-out-for>.

About LifeLock

LifeLock is the leader in identity theft protection in the U.S., and a brand of Gen™ (NASDAQ: GEN), a global company dedicated to powering Digital Freedom through its family of trusted consumer brands. Millions of customers trust LifeLock to help protect their identities. LifeLock detects and alerts people to possible identity threats, and its dedicated Identity Restoration Specialists help people restore their identity if they do become a victim. All LifeLock members also have coverage through LifeLock's Million Dollar Protection™ Package which provides additional coverage for stolen funds and lawyer and expert support. Learn more at [LifeLock.Norton.com](#) and [GenDigital.com](#).

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