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## AARP Fraud Watch Network Campaign Targets 'IRS Imposter Scam'

### Thousands of Consumers Nationwide Victimized by Aggressive Scam

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – As federal regulators report a surge in tax-related fraud schemes, the **AARP Fraud Watch Network** has launched a campaign to help protect consumers from the “IRS imposter scam.”

Criminals impersonating agents of the Internal Revenue Service represent an escalating threat to taxpayers, according to the IRS. These con artists telephone people and tell them that they are in serious trouble for non-payment of back taxes.

The targets are aggressively threatened with police arrest, court action, confiscation of property, or even deportation unless they make immediate payment – usually via credit card, debit card or wire transfer. The Treasury Department **reports** that since late 2013, more than 5,500 victims have lost approximately \$29 million in this scam.

In response, the AARP Fraud Watch Network is conducting an educational campaign, with digital advertising featuring a new **tip sheet** and **online video**.

“Our goal is to warn consumers and empower them with the knowledge they need to keep their family members from falling victim to the IRS imposters,” said Nancy LeaMond, Chief Advocacy & Engagement Officer, AARP. “Once they recognize certain red flags, they will be confident in resisting the aggressive bullying and scare tactics used by the scammers.”

The Fraud Watch Network campaign is advising consumers that legitimate IRS representatives do not:

- Call you to demand immediate payment.
- Call you about taxes owed ***without first having contacted you by mail.***
- Require you to use a specific payment method for your taxes, such as a prepaid debit card; or ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone.
- Threaten to bring in local police or other law-enforcement groups to have you arrested for not paying.

For more information about the IRS scam and other tax-related frauds, visit [www.aarp.org/FraudWatchNetwork](http://www.aarp.org/FraudWatchNetwork). Consumers who think that they are being targeted by a scammer may call the FWN helpline at 877-908-3360 and speak with a trained counselor.


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**About AARP** AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, with a membership of nearly 38 million, that helps people turn their goals and dreams into real possibilities, strengthens communities and fights for the issues that matter most to families such as healthcare, employment and income security, retirement planning, affordable utilities and protection from financial abuse. We advocate for individuals in the marketplace by selecting products and services of high quality and value to carry the AARP name as well as help our members obtain discounts on a wide range of products, travel, and services. A trusted source for lifestyle tips, news and educational information, AARP produces AARP The Magazine, the world's largest circulation magazine; AARP Bulletin; [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org); AARP TV & Radio; AARP Books; and AARP en Español, a Spanish-language website addressing the interests and needs of Hispanics. AARP does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to political campaigns or candidates. The AARP Foundation is an affiliated charity that provides security, protection, and empowerment to older persons in need with support from thousands of volunteers, donors, and sponsors. AARP has staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Learn more at [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org).

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