

# Neighbourhood Watch Alert: Self Assessment Tax Scams

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## Overview

HMRC is warning of a rise in Self Assessment scams ahead of the January 31<sup>st</sup> filing deadline. Scammers will often target taxpayers around peak filing periods, using persuasive or threatening tactics to obtain personal information or try and get the individual to make a payment to them.

HMRC will never ask for bank account details or personal information via text message or email, and will never leave voicemails threatening legal action or arrest.

## Examples:

- Emails or texts offering a tax rebate if you verify your details or provide bank details.
- Texts or phone calls stating there's a warrant out for your arrest because you owe HMRC money.

## How these scams operate:

- Fake tax demands or offers of refunds are sent via email, text or phone calls.
- Sense of urgency or pressure to respond ("You must act today").
- Threats of legal action or arrest if you do not take action.
- Using official logos and branding on communications.
- Number spoofing or email spoofing to make it appear as if the message has been sent from 'HMRC'.
- Directing victims to fake websites that mimic real ones, to harvest personal information or spread malware.
- Attempting to steal banking passcodes or one-time verification codes.

## How to protect yourself:

- Never click unexpected links or open attachments in texts or emails.
- Do not share personal details, bank details or security codes.
- Check sender addresses carefully.
- If you feel uncomfortable or suspect a phone call could be a scam, hang up.
- Only contact organisations using official numbers that you've researched yourself.
- Enable multi-factor authentication.
- Delete suspicious messages immediately after reporting them.
- Do not share your HMRC sign in details with anyone.
- Use strong and different passwords on all your accounts.

## How to report scams:

- Forward scam HMRC texts to: 60599 (charged at network rate)
- Forward any other phishing/smishing texts to: 7726
- Forward phishing emails to: [phishing@hmrc.gov.uk](mailto:phishing@hmrc.gov.uk)
- Report suspicious phone calls: [Report the call online](#)
- Report fraud: [www.reportfraud.police.uk/](http://www.reportfraud.police.uk/)
- Citizens Advice – Advice on Scams: [Citizens Advice advice on scams](#)
- Citizens Advice Scams Helpline: 0808 223 1133
- NCSC Cybercrime guidance: [www.ncsc.gov.uk](http://www.ncsc.gov.uk)

