

**KHD Alert:**

There are a number of scams going around in which criminals purporting to represent the IRS seek personal information from unsuspecting victims. Some of these scams take the form of threatening phone calls and others are sent via regular or electronic mail.

Several of our clients have recently received an official looking IRS Form W-8BEN requesting detailed personal and financial information. Please be exceptionally careful any time you receive a form or other correspondence purporting to be from the IRS.

As a reminder, the IRS does not use the telephone to demand immediate payment of delinquent taxes without first sending several written requests. It also never threatens to involve local police or other law-enforcement to have taxpayers arrested for non-payment.

The IRS does not demand any specific form of payment (such as a credit or debit card) and never asks for credit or debit card numbers on the telephone. And none of its official forms require detailed bank and brokerage account information, a passport number, a birth date, an ATM PIN number, or a mother's maiden name.

If you have the slightest doubt about the authenticity of anything you receive purporting to be from the IRS, we encourage you to reach out to your accountant or other tax advisor. We've all heard horror stories of people losing large amounts of money to con artists. Please be vigilant not to fall victim simply because someone purports to be from the IRS.