

# **HM Revenue and Customs Alert**

## **What you need to know**

Action Fraud has experienced an increase in the reporting of malicious calls, voicemails, text messages or emails to members of the public purporting to be from HMRC.

The fraudsters state that as a result of their non-payment of tax or other duty, the victim is liable to prosecution or other legal proceedings such as repossession of belongings to settle the balance but can avoid this by arranging for payment to be made immediately by method such as bank transfer or by iTunes gift cards.

If the victim is hesitant or refuses to comply, the suspect makes a threat such as immediate arrest, bailiffs or in cases where the victim appears to be of overseas origin; deportation.

Often, the period for which the tax is allegedly due is distant enough to guarantee the victim will have little, if any, paperwork or ability to verify the claims. Once the money is paid the suspects sever all contact.

It is vital that the public exercise caution when receiving messages or telephone calls of this nature.

## **What you need to do**

Always question unsolicited requests for your personal or financial information. Just because someone knows your basic details (such as your name and contact details), it doesn't mean they are genuine. Instead, contact the company directly using trusted methods such as a known email address or phone number.

Listen to your instincts. If something feels wrong then it is usually right to question it. No genuine organisation will ask you to pay taxes, bills or fees using iTunes Gift Cards, or any other type of voucher.

Don't be rushed or pressured into making a decision. Under no circumstances would a genuine bank or some other trusted organisation force you to make a financial transaction on the spot.

Report Phishing attempts. If you receive a call, text or email of this nature and have not lost money, report this as a phishing attempt to Action Fraud.

## **Message Sent By**

Action Fraud (Action Fraud, Administrator, National)