



Taxpayers Who Receive an IRS Notice

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ACCOUNTANTS AND ENROLLED AGENTS

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Tips for Taxpayers Who Receive an IRS Notice

Receiving a notice from the Internal Revenue Service is usually no cause for alarm. Every year the IRS sends millions of letters and notices to taxpayers. In the event one shows up in your mailbox, here are 10 things you should know.

- 1) Do not panic. Many of these letters can be dealt with very simply.
- 2) Do not ignore it. Most of these letters have a "reply by" date. Inaction can lead to additional interest and penalties or more aggressive action from the IRS.
- 3) Contact your tax professional. Your tax professional is available to help you, is familiar with your situation, and has experience dealing with the IRS. Utilize his or her expertise. He or she will generally want to see a copy of the letter to determine the next course of action. Some letters can be resolved simply by having you contact the IRS directly. Other, more complicated issues may require you to sign Form 2848, *Power of Attorney and Declaration of Representative*, to allow your tax professional to communicate with the IRS on your behalf.
- 4) There are a number of reasons the IRS sends notices to taxpayers. The notice may request payment of taxes, notify you of a change to your account, or request additional information. The notice you receive normally covers a very specific issue about your account.
- 5) Each letter and notice offers specific instructions on what you need to do to satisfy the inquiry.
- 6) If you receive a notice about a correction to your tax return, you should review the correspondence and compare it with the information on your return.
- 7) If you agree with the correction to your account, usually no reply is necessary unless a payment is due.

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- 8) If you do not agree with the correction the IRS made, it is important that you respond as requested. Respond to the IRS in writing to explain why you disagree. Be courteous and respectful. Include any documents and information you wish the IRS to consider, along with the contact stub at the bottom of the notice. Mail to the address shown on the letter. Allow at least 30 days for a response from the IRS.
- 9) Most correspondence can be handled without calling or visiting an IRS office. However, if you have questions, call the telephone number in the upper right corner of the notice. When you call, have a copy of your tax return and the correspondence available.
- 10) Keep copies of any correspondence with your tax records.

As with any tax issue, contact your tax professional to help you navigate your own unique situation.

Taxpayer Rights

IRS employees are required to explain and protect your rights as a taxpayer throughout your contact with them.

Privacy and Confidentiality

The IRS will not disclose to anyone the information you give them, except as authorized by you or the law. You have the right to know why they are asking you for information, how they will use it, and what will happen if you do not provide the requested information.

Professional and Courteous Service

If you believe that an IRS employee has not treated you in a professional, fair, and courteous manner, you should tell that employee's supervisor. If the supervisor's response is not satisfactory, you should write to the IRS director for your area or the center where you file your return.