

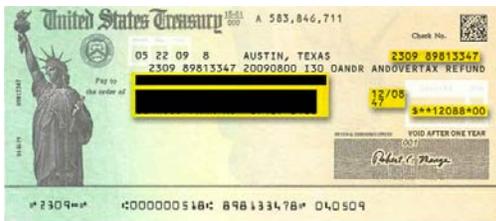


IRS-Criminal Investigation Law Enforcement Bulletin

Identity Theft and Tax Refund Fraud

Many criminals have engaged in schemes utilizing stolen identities to file fraudulent tax returns and receive significant refunds. IRS-CI is aggressively pursuing the prosecution of crimes involving identity theft used to obtain false refunds.

The fraudulent refunds are received in three forms: United States Treasury Refund Checks, Stored Value Cards, and Direct Deposits.



Refund Check



Stored Value Cards

Many law enforcement agencies have uncovered evidence of these schemes during investigations (narcotics, fraud), traffic stops, debriefing of Confidential Informants, arrests, and search warrants for unrelated offenses.

Items to look for:

- Multiple federal refund checks in multiple names either going to the same address or multiple addresses, or multiple stored value cards;
- Listings of names, social security numbers, and addresses;
- Multiple forms of identification including driver's licenses, birth certificates, social security cards;
- Bank statements listing multiple refunds deposited into accounts;
- Tax forms including Form 1040 and Form W-2, multiple envelopes addressed to IRS Service Centers or correspondences from IRS in multiple names;
- Individuals who allege to be return preparers as an explanation for possessing the items listed above;
- Individuals who are offering refund check cashing services out of a location other than a storefront or individuals who are willing to pay a large fee for the negotiation of refund checks.