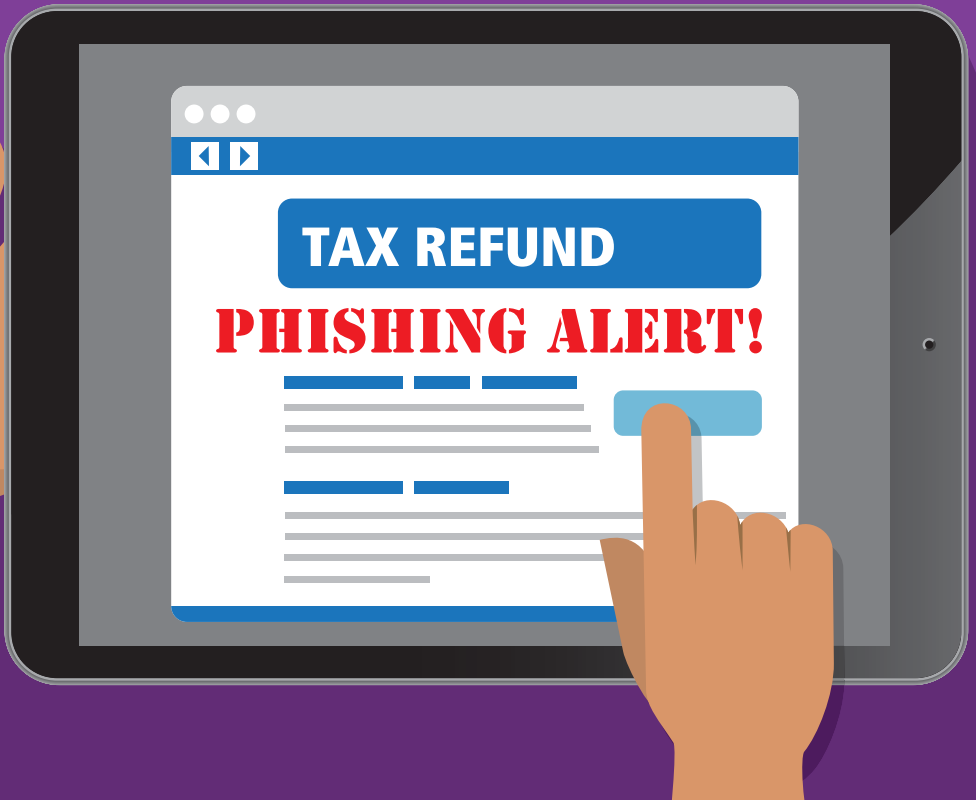


Is that tax refund or underpayment email really from HMRC?



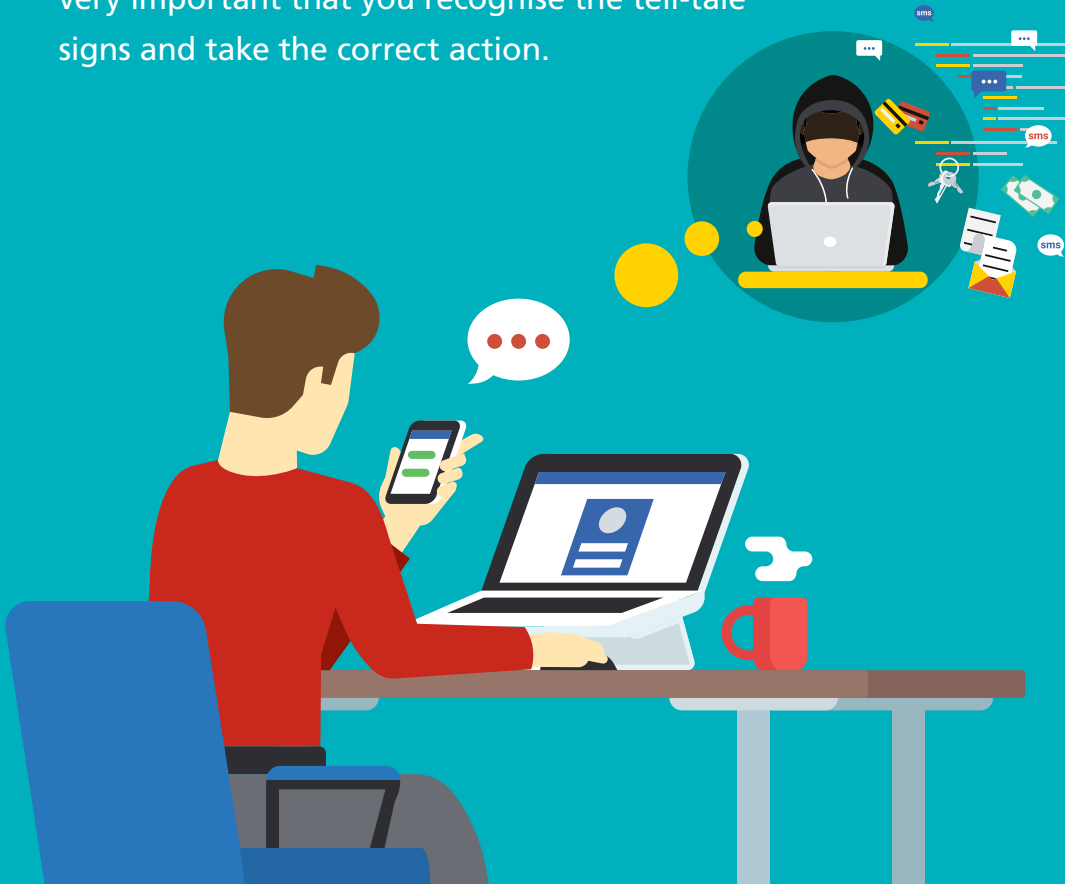
www.getsafeonline.org/westsussex

www.westsussex.gov.uk/stayingssafeonline

Have you received emails, texts or social media posts claiming to be from HMRC, telling you that you have a tax refund and you need to click on a link or open an attachment to get more information?

Or that you owe tax, and there will be a penalty if you don't pay it straight away?

HMRC or any other government organisation would never contact you like this, but many people get duped into the scam because they're eager to reclaim their money. This makes it very important that you recognise the tell-tale signs and take the correct action.



The most commonplace tax scams

- A bogus email claiming to be from HMRC with an attached file.
- An email advising customers to a 'create a Government Gateway Account' in order to receive a tax refund.
- A bogus email advising customers to download an attachment to request a tax refund through PayPal. HMRC would never use PayPal to make a refund.
- A communication demanding an urgent tax payment by purchasing iTunes or other gift cards/vouchers. Following the purchase, you're asked to pay the fraudster over the phone by reading out the 16-digit code (in the case of iTunes gift cards) on the back of the card.



Top tips for protecting yourself from tax scams

Beware of emails which:

- Claim to be from HMRC, notifying you of a refund or other specific matter.
- Have a sender's email address which is even slightly different from the HMRC or other trusted organisation's website address, a completely different address or a free webmail address.
- Incorporate a sense of urgency.
- Request personal information such as username, password or bank details.
- Do not click on attachments or links. Instead, delete the email, do not respond and do not forward it unless to report it to HMRC or another authority.

If you think you have been a victim of fraud Report it to Action Fraud, the UK's national fraud reporting centre by calling **0300 123 20 40** or by visiting **www.actionfraud.police.uk**

Get Safe Online

Get Safe Online is the UK's leading source of information and advice on online safety and security, for the public and small businesses. It is a not-for-profit, public/private sector partnership backed by law enforcement agencies and leading organisations in internet security, banking and retail.



For more information and expert, easy-to-follow, impartial advice on safeguarding yourself, your family, finances, devices and workplace, visit www.getsafeonline.org



www.getsafeonline.org/westsussex

www.westsussex.gov.uk/staying-safe-online

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