

# News Release

## Comptroller Lierman Encourages Marylanders to Look Out for Scams This Tax Season

*Agency urges taxpayers to beware of suspicious communications, protect personal information*

**ANNAPOLIS, Md. (January 23, 2026)** — The Comptroller of Maryland is warning about fraudulent notices and possible tax scams ahead of tax season, which is slated to begin on January 26, 2026. Recently, the agency was alerted by a taxpayer that they received a fraudulent notice purporting to be from the Comptroller of Maryland.

“After examining the notice closely, the taxpayer thought it was suspicious and brought the notice to one of our branch offices, where our team confirmed the notice they received in the mail was fake. Scammers are getting better, with technology and time, at convincing people to hand over sensitive and valuable information without a second look,” explained **Comptroller Brooke E. Lierman**. “People who want to steal your money or sensitive information are relying on you to panic when you see ‘Comptroller of Maryland’ or ‘IRS’. Please slow down, take time to think carefully about the interaction, and if something doesn’t seem right, hang up and reach out for help.”

[The IRS warns](#) that impostors often promise a big payday, make demands to pay immediately, and will not allow you to appeal what they say you owe. Fraudulent notices also contain website links and contact information that do not belong to the agency.

Debt collection schemes are also common and involve scammers posing as an employee from a government or collections agency. Taxpayers are encouraged to hang up if they receive suspicious or threatening phone calls and delete emails demanding immediate payment. They should then contact the Comptroller of Maryland or the IRS directly to find out whether they owe a tax debt.

The Comptroller’s Office is working diligently to protect taxpayers from fraudulent returns. In addition to promoting online filing options to help taxpayers keep their

personal and financial information secure, the agency spends the first week of tax season testing fraud detection models and other tools to ensure seamless processing. The agency uses state-of-the-art technology to identify suspicious tax returns and suspicious tax preparation businesses, and flags those returns for additional review.

“Last year, our agency identified and blocked more than 15,447 fraudulent returns and blocked \$42,933,920 fraudulent refunds,” **Chief Deputy Comptroller Andy Schaufele** said. “If you receive a letter from the Comptroller of Maryland about an attempt to file a fraudulent return, this will not affect your valid return, and we take every step possible to ensure your personal and financial information is secure.”

The Comptroller of Maryland has a number of resources available on its website, <https://www.marylandcomptroller.gov/>, including information related to identity theft protection and avoiding tax scams.

**There are three ways taxpayers can reach out to the Comptroller of Maryland if they have questions:**

- Calling the taxpayer services division, Monday through Friday, between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., (extending to 6 p.m. beginning February 2) at 410-260-7980 from central Maryland or 1-800-MDTAXES (1-800-638-2937).
- Opening a case in the MyCOMConnect customer service portal at <http://www.marylandcomptroller.gov/help>
- Making an in-person or virtual appointment with one of the [11 branch offices across Maryland](#).

Taxpayers will also need to [contact the IRS](#) for further information about their federal return or notices, calls, or emails about a federal tax liability.

The Office of the Attorney General also provides tips for [protecting against identity theft](#) on its website.

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