



# Rhode Island Department of Revenue

## Division of Taxation

ADV 2020-46  
SECURITY SUMMIT

ADVISORY FOR TAX PROFESSIONALS  
NOVEMBER 4, 2020

### **Beware of new scam involving federal economic impact payments**

*Security Summit issues alert about thieves who try to trick people via smartphone texts*

PROVIDENCE — The Internal Revenue Service, the Rhode Island Division of Taxation, and other partners in the Security Summit today warned of a new text scam in which thieves try to trick people into disclosing bank account information under the guise of receiving the \$1,200 federal economic impact payment.



The IRS, states, and the tax-preparation industry, working together as the Security Summit, remind taxpayers that neither the IRS nor state tax agencies will ever text taxpayers asking for bank account information so that an economic impact payment deposit may be made. (Economic impact payments are sometimes called “stimulus payments”, “COVID-19 payments”, or “recovery rebates”.)

“Criminals are relentlessly using COVID-19 and economic impact payments as cover to try to trick taxpayers out of their money or identities,” said IRS Commissioner Chuck Rettig. “This scam is a new twist on those we’ve been seeing much of this year. We urge people to remain alert to these types of scams.”

#### **How it works**

The scam text message states:

“You have received a direct deposit of \$1,200 from COVID-19 TREAS FUND. Further action is required to accept this payment into your account. Continue here to accept this payment ...”

The text includes a link to a fake phishing web address. This fake phishing URL, which appears to come from a state agency or relief organization, takes recipients to a fraudulent website that impersonates the IRS’s “Get My Payment” website. Individuals who visit the fraudulent website and then enter their personal and financial account information will have their information collected by these criminals.

People who receive this text scam should take a screen shot of the text message that they received and then include the screenshot in an email to [phishing@irs.gov](mailto:phishing@irs.gov) with the following information:

- Date/Time/Time zone that they received the text message;
- The number that appeared on their Caller ID; and
- The number that received the text message.

Keep in mind that neither the IRS nor the Rhode Island Division of Taxation sends unsolicited texts or emails. Neither the IRS nor the Rhode Island Division of Taxation calls people with threats of jail or

lawsuits. Also, neither the IRS nor the Rhode Island Division of Taxation demands tax payments on gift cards.

People who believe they are eligible for the federal economic impact payment should go directly to the following official IRS webpage: <https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus/get-my-payment>.

People who do not have a filing requirement but who are eligible for a federal economic impact payment can use the following official IRS webpage until November 21, 2020, to claim their payment: <https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus/non-filers-enter-payment-info-here>.

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*The Security Summit consists of the IRS, the Rhode Island Division of Taxation, other states' tax agencies, and the tax community -- including tax preparation firms, software developers, tax professional organizations, and financial institutions. Partners in the Security Summit work together to combat identity theft and fight other scams to protect the nation's taxpayers.*

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