



HMRC Alert

What you need to know

- **Action Fraud has experienced an increase in the reporting of malicious calls and voicemails to members of the public, purporting to be from Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC).**
- Fraudsters are spoofing genuine HMRC phone numbers to deceive victims. They state that as a result of the victim's non-payment of tax or other duty, he is liable for prosecution or other legal proceedings to settle the balance. The fraudsters suggest victims can avoid this, by arranging immediate payment, such as bank transfer or by purchasing iTunes gift cards.
- If the victim is hesitant or refuses to comply, the suspect threatens immediate arrest, sending bailiffs to the victim's address or, in some cases, deportation.
- Often, the period for which the tax is allegedly due is distant enough to guarantee the victim will have little, if any, paperwork or ability to verify the claims. Once the money is paid the suspects sever all contact with the victim.
- In genuine cases, HMRC will initially make direct contact with you via post/letter and potentially follow up that letter with a phone call at a later date. quoting the reference number on the initial letter.

It is vital that the public exercise caution when receiving messages or telephone calls of this nature.

What you need to do

- Always question unsolicited requests for your personal or financial information. Just because someone knows your basic details (such as your name and contact details), it doesn't mean they are genuine. Instead, contact the company directly using trusted methods such as a known email address or phone number.
- No genuine bank or other trusted organisation would force you to make a financial transaction on the spot.
- Report Phishing attempts. If you receive a call, text or email of this nature and have not lost money, you can report this as phishing to Action Fraud