

# Spam, bogus calls and texts

## How to deal with suspicious communications

**Criminals are astute and adapt at exploiting changes in legislation to trick us into believing that they are your bank, HMRC, court officers or some other representative of authority.**

Their aim is to gain access to your personal data and/or bank details so they can fraudulently take your money.

### By email:

If you ever receive an email that offers an incentive, say a tax refund, or threatens you with a fine or court action unless you provide certain information or follow specific directions, your immediate response should be to assume that you have received a bogus email.

**Under NO circumstances should you click on any links in the email or open any attachments.**

Examples recently have included bogus links to claim the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme grants.

### By text:

Recent examples have included offers of COVID funding. Again, do not open any links or respond in any way to these texts.

### By phone:

Automated calls are being made advising you that HMRC is filing a lawsuit against you and to press 1 to speak to a case worker.

**End these calls immediately and block the number on your phone.**

### WhatsApp:

If you receive any communication via WhatsApp from HMRC it will be a scam. Don't respond to these messages.

### Twitter and social media:

Social media is also being used to fool members into responding to offers of tax refunds. As before, these requests will be bogus and should be ignored.

## Our advice

If you receive messages through any of the above channels and you are unsure if you should respond, **please call for advice if you are a client and avoid following any of the instructions you have been asked to undertake.**

If you manage your own tax affairs and the communication you have received is tax related, contact HMRC using one of the phone lines published on the GOV.UK website to ask if the message you have received is genuine.

You can also report suspicious HMRC emails, text messages and phone calls by following the instructions at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs/contact/reporting-fraudulent-emails>.

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