

## ALERT: Phishing Scam targeting educational institutions

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To: MCC - All <MCC-ALL@MOHAVE.EDU>

Cc: Heather Patenaude <hpatenaude@mohave.edu>

Dear MCC Community,

The Internal Revenue Service (<https://www.irs.gov>) is warning of an increase in phishing scams targeting education community with the goal of stealing tax refunds. The IT department has also received warnings that similar scams are targeting stimulus payments. The IRS article is here: <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/irs-warns-university-students-and-staff-of-impersonation-email-scam>

The scam is an impersonation scenario wherein the scammer attempts to pass themselves off as an IRS employee who will help you claim, “recalculate”, or increase your stimulus payment or tax refund. The e-mails contain IRS logos and spoofs IRS e-mail addresses. The e-mails have subject lines such as “Tax Refund Payment or “Recalculation of your tax refund payment.” **Employees of the IRS will never e-mail you to recalculate tax payments or stimulus checks – these e-mails are scams and should be deleted immediately.** You can check the status of a stimulus payment for free at the IRS “Get My Payment” website. The website address is <https://sa.www4.irs.gov/irfof-wmsp/login> Your tax refund payment status can be checked at the IRS “Where’s My Refund?” website. The website address is <https://www.irs.gov/refunds>

Remember the basics of e-mail phishing prevention:

1. Suspicious e-mails to your Mohave e-mail account should be forwarded to [abuse@mohave.edu](mailto:abuse@mohave.edu).
2. If the e-mail is asking you to hurry, it’s probably a scam.
3. If the e-mail is asking you for personal information, it’s a scam.
4. If the e-mail has a link to a website, hover your mouse over the site to make sure it’s not redirecting you somewhere else. Then assume it might be a scam anyway – you can always pick up the phone and call!
5. The IRS will never e-mail you about taxes due or your refund. The IRS will never call you about taxes due or your refund. The way the IRS gets in touch with taxpayers is via certified mail.
6. Your bank knows where you live, your phone number, and the details of your account – they never need you to verify them via e-mail or website. If you have a bank that does this, get a new bank.
7. If it sounds too good to be true, it is. If you don’t believe that, I’ve got title to a bridge in San Francisco for sale – reach out and we’ll talk price!
8. Always be willing to slow down and think – there’s nothing so urgent that it should cost you everything you own.

There are additional resources available at [www.mohave.edu/it](http://www.mohave.edu/it). Please be careful – scammers are ever vigilant, so you should be too. As ever, should you have questions please don’t hesitate to reach out to me directly.

Be Safe and Be Well,

Mark

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