



Top 5 Things To Do When the IRS Contacts You

Getting a notice from the IRS, or worse, being contacted directly by an agent, is extremely stressful. It is in your best financial interest to get matters sorted out and resolved as quickly as possible. Below are the five things you need to do when the IRS comes calling.

1. **Do Not Ignore It** - A notice from the IRS doesn't always mean you're being audited. So don't panic. However, the single most important thing you need to know is this: The IRS will not go away or suddenly realize they've made a mistake and stop contacting you. If you bury your head in the sand waiting to see what happens next, it will make matters worse. The federal government is very aggressive when it comes to collecting monies they allege you owe.
2. **Contact the IRS Immediately** - If you were contacted by mail, immediately call the number provided in order to buy some time. The IRS is typically compliant with this request. Call the phone number in their letter and tell them you are in the process of hiring professional help and ask for a 30-day hold. However, if you are ever contacted by phone...
3. **Keep Your Mouth Shut** - Nothing good comes from trying to be forthcoming, friendly or chatty. The IRS auditor or agent is not going to treat you or your case more positively because they like you or think you seem nice. You cannot talk your way out of an audit or investigation and any story you may heard otherwise is a lie.

More importantly, if you are contacted by a special agent, a representative of the Criminal Investigation Division of the IRS, or an FBI agent, be courteous but only give your name, address, and social security number. These types of officials are not typically involved in routine audits. It's usually something much more serious and any information disclosed to these agents may be used in a criminal proceeding.

Also, no matter how much you want to, do not chat about your dealings with the IRS with friends and family. If it's a routine audit, everybody has a story they think will help...and it won't. If you're involved in an investigation, the agents are probably going to be talking with your friends and family anyway. Best not to give them any advantage.

4. **Get Help** - If you are being audited or investigated, contact Siegel Tax Law immediately. You will obtain far better results than if you try and handle it on your own. The reasons are simple. First, you get an intermediary between you and the IRS. This is important because it gives you a chance to determine the true intent of their notice or contact, locate documents in response to their requests, and respond in an intelligent and organized manner.

Next, all emotions are removed from the situation. There are few things as stressful as being contacted by the IRS. You can't operate efficiently under stress nor make clear, appropriate and timely decisions, all crucial to a successful outcome.

Finally, you'll be working with someone who has extensive experience in dealing with the IRS, knows its policies and procedures, and is best suited to help you reach a settlement. Often, our clients never have to even meet with the I.R.S.

5. **Become Document Obsessed** - First, keep copies of all notices and letters you receive from the IRS. You'd think this would be a no brainer, but it happens way too often.

Even if you do not have every document you'll eventually need at your fingertips, collect what you do have and bring them to your first meeting with us. The IRS will not consider an Offer in Compromise or an Installment Agreement unless you are up to date on filing your returns. Not paying back taxes...just the filing part. To do that, we'll need you to have all documents surrounding your case in order.

We'll also help you understand the documents that are being requested and insure that you only turn over those. The IRS only has the right to request certain types of documents from you. They cannot go on a fishing trip looking for something wrong.

Also, never give the IRS original documents without making copies.

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Jeffrey R. Siegel (Siegel Tax Law) understands tax statutes, case law and I.R.S. procedures. He possesses, not only a doctorate in law and a post-doctorate LL.M. (Masters in Tax Accounting), but a high degree of skill and success in securing the best obtainable results against the I.R.S. for his clients. He has practiced law for nearly 30 years and is licensed to practice in California, Colorado, Missouri, Kansas and Maryland.