

Warren County Veterans Service Officer's Report for September 2012

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Scam Targeting Veterans~

Emails are being sent to individuals, including military members, military retirees, and civilian employees, which appear to be sent by Defense Finance and Accounting Services. Although the email appears to come from DFAS and displays a .mil email address it is actually from a non-government email account.

The emails indicate that individuals who are receiving disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs may be able to obtain additional funds from the IRS. These emails are not issued by DFAS.

The email indicates that individuals receiving VA disability compensation can receive additional funds from the IRS by sending copies of VA award letters, income tax returns, 1099-Rs, Retiree Account Statements, and DD 214s, to a retired Colonel at an address in Florida.

These schemes can be quite costly for victims. Promoters may charge exorbitant upfront fees to file these claims and are often long gone when victims discover they've been scammed.

Taxpayers should be careful of these scams because, regardless of who prepared their tax return, the taxpayer is legally responsible for the accuracy of their tax return and must repay any refunds received in error, plus any penalties and interest. They may even face criminal prosecution.

To avoid becoming ensnared in these schemes, taxpayers should beware of any of the following:

- Fictitious claims for refunds or rebates based on false statements of entitlement to tax credits
- Emails from unfamiliar senders asking for personal information
- Internet solicitations that direct individuals to toll-free numbers and then solicit Social Security numbers or other personal information

If you receive a notice from the IRS, respond immediately. If you believe someone may have used your SSN fraudulently, please notify IRS immediately by responding to the name and number printed on the notice or letter. You will need to fill out the IRS Identity Theft Affidavit, Form 14039.

Retroactive Agent Orange Claims Nearly Complete: The Department of Veterans Affairs announced that nearly 230,000 claims have already been processed for the three newest Agent-Orange related conditions through June 2012, including over 150,000 claims required to be adjudicated under the order of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California in *Nehmer v. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*.

The near completion of these complex *Nehmer* claims enables VA to redirect 1,200 employees who were dedicated to reviewing the Agent Orange cases toward addressing the current backlog of disability claims.
