

The Latest Social Security Number Scam

December 31, 2018 - If you think that your social security number never expires, you are correct. But that isn't stopping the scam artists who are trying to convince people that they can expire. It's the latest telephone scam being attempted and people are falling for it in droves. It's also one of the easiest scams to protect yourself from if you know what to do.

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var s = document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(po, s);  
})();
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The Social Security Administration is warning consumers about this telephone scam. Here is the way it works.

You receive a call claiming to be from someone in the SSA's Office of Inspector General. You're told that your SSN has been associated with a crime. It could be a tax scam, fraud, identity theft or some other form of crime. The caller will then tell you that because of this, your SSN is going to be deleted or deactivated. But then they give you some hope. The caller can take care of the issue if you just provide them with some information. Or if they get your voice mail, they leave a message telling you that you can take care of the issue by calling a toll free number and providing some information on yourself. Whatever you do, don't call that number. If you do, you'll become an identity theft victim!

Social security numbers don't expire and the SSA doesn't delete or deactivate them - much to the chagrin of identity theft victims. In fact, most identity theft victims will probably tell you that if the agency gave them the ability to delete their old SSN and get a new one, they'd do that in a heartbeat. It simply isn't an option.

Just as importantly, the SSA will never call you and ask you to provide your personally identifiable information to them. They already have it. If you call them, they may ask you to verify your identity by providing some information, but that's for your protection on calls that you initiate.

If the SSA has an issue with you, they will send you written correspondence via snail mail.

This scam is similar to the IRS call scam that has been going on for years now. And the methods to use to protect yourself are identical. If you receive a call like the one described here, hang up. If you receive a voice mail message, don't respond to it. And if you're worried that the call might be legitimate, don't return the call by using the phone number displayed on your phone or left behind in a voice mail message. You can contact the Social Security Administration's Inspector General at 800-269-0271 or better yet, look the number up yourself and then call it.

by Jim Malmberg

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