

# Scams and Fraud Alerts

UIW International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) have received reports that international students and scholars in the U.S. continue to be subjected to scams involving calls claiming to be someone from a government agency including the FBI, USCIS, IRS, the Bexar County Detention Center, University Police, and even 911. The caller will demand payment with a specific method such as wire transfer or gift cards to resolve an error with your record.

These calls are completely false. In some cases, the caller:

- Claims you did something wrong regarding your immigration status or taxes, and that you are going to be deported.
- Claims you are under surveillance, and that you cannot contact any other individual or go to any website to confirm this issue.
- They state that you must wire money to them to start an investigation, or to pay a fine, etc. and they ask you to provide other sensitive personal and financial information in the process including your Social Security Number, bank account information, and other identity documents.

Even if the caller already has a lot of information about you, do not share any additional personal or financial information such as your SSN, bank account, or debit/card information.

Stay informed and aware of U.S. Laws and systems:

- No government agency or agent will call you to demand payment over the phone. Even in cases where legitimate money is owed (such as taxes) the government will communicate with you in writing, not over the phone.
- 911 is not a number that you will receive a call from. The only time that 911 may legitimately show up as a number in your caller ID is in the case of a “Reverse 911” call (which will give safety information advising a threat in your area, and is usually a recorded message. Very similar to the RAVE Alert system).
- The government will not demand a particular method of payment (such as wire transfer, gift cards, etc.). There will be multiple methods of payment available.
- The government will not ask for your personal or financial information such as your SSN, bank account information, credit or debit card numbers over the phone.
- The government will not threaten arrest or deportation over non-payment.
- A government agent cannot remain anonymous- they must disclose badge information.

## **What should you do if you get such a call?**

1. Do NOT transfer any money or share any personal or financial details, even if the caller already has a lot of information about you.
2. Try to get the name and contact number for whomever is calling, along with a badge number.
3. HANG UP!!! Do not answer any additional calls from that number.

4. Report it to the Federal Trade Commission at <https://www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov/> If you receive an email are not sure if it is a scam, forward the suspicious email to the USCIS Webmaster at [webmaster@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:webmaster@uscis.dhs.gov). USCIS will review the emails received and share with law enforcement agencies as appropriate.
5. Use UIW's "[Report an Incident](#)" website immediately to report it to the university. If you need assistance completing the form, come to the ISSS Office.
6. Email the ISSS office at [intl@uiwtx.edu](mailto:intl@uiwtx.edu) so that we are aware of current fraud scams and can alert other UIW students and scholars.

### **What should I do if I already gave them personal information or transferred money?**

1. Call University Police at 210.829.6030 to file a report. The police will most likely not be able to get you back your money if the money was already picked up after being wired. However the police report can be helpful in making other credit protection reports.
2. Please also notify ISSS so that we are aware of current fraud scams and can alert other UIW students and scholars.
3. If you gave someone your Social Security Number, [report that to the SSA](#). Also read [this publication](#) for additional information.
4. Monitor your credit. The Federal Trade Commission has developed [an extensive guide to managing identity theft](#). Some of this you may not need if you are not noticing any fraudulent activity on your credit report, but you must check your credit report to be sure. You are entitled to a [free report](#) every year.

### **How did they figure out I was here on a visa? How did they get my phone number?**

UIW strictly protects your status as an international student or scholar. Most often, identifying you as someone on a visa is an informed guess based on information that you have made public.

1. Check your LinkedIn and other job search accounts. Remove your phone number and address from any posted resume or summary of your work history. Leave only email.
2. Check all other social media accounts, particularly if they are public. Remove your phone number for those accounts and be careful with the personal information you post.
3. NEVER post or share a photo of your immigration documents, visa, passport, driver license, tax forms or other government issued document.
4. If any immigration documents are lost or stolen, report them Immediately

Other types of scams to be aware of:

- [New Scam Alerts](#)
- [Employment Scam Targeting College Students](#)
- [Email Phishing Scams](#)

Learn more about common scams and frauds at <https://www.usa.gov/scams-and-frauds>