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Don't Fall For the Telephone Scam About 'Suspending' Your Social Security Number

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A caller says that he's from the government and your Social Security Number (SSN) has been suspended. He sounds very professional. So you should do exactly what he says to fix things ... right?

Wrong.

The FTC has gotten reports about scammers trying to trick people out of their personal information by telling them that they need to "reactivate" their supposedly "suspended" SSNs.

— [This article](#) is from the Federal Trade Commission's Consumer Information blog. Lisa Lake is a consumer education specialist at the FTC.

The scammers say the SSN was suspended because of some connection to fraud or other criminal activity.

They say to call a number to clear it up – where they'll ask you for personal information.

Thing is, **Social Security Numbers do not get suspended.** This is just a variation of a [government imposter scam](#) that's after your SSN, bank account number, or other personal information. In this variation of the scheme, the caller pretends to be *protecting* you from a scam while he's trying to lure you into one.

Here are a few tips to protect yourself:

Never give out or confirm personal information over the phone, via email or on a website until you've checked out whoever is asking you for it.

Do not trust a name, phone number, or email address just because it seems to be connected with the government. Con artists use official-sounding names and may fake caller ID or email address information to make you trust them. Besides, the government normally contacts people by postal mail.

Contact government agencies directly, using telephone numbers and website addresses you know to be legitimate.

If someone has tried to steal your personal information by pretending to be from the government, [report it to the FTC.](#)