

## What You Should Do If You Find Yourself in Trouble with the IRS

While running into problems with the IRS can be a terrifying prospect, the fact is that we're all human, and if you forgot to file or pay your taxes one time, you're not alone. The good news is that if you find yourself under scrutiny by the IRS, there are a few critical steps that you can take to avoid getting into further trouble. To help you through this difficult time, here are a few tips on what you should do if you find yourself in trouble with the IRS this tax season.

### Don't Ignore IRS Notices

If you find yourself in trouble with the IRS, the most important thing for you to do is not ignore any [notices](#) that you may receive from them in the mail. Many people's first instinct is to ignore these notices, either because they are afraid to deal with the IRS, or because they hope that if they ignore them, then the IRS will forget about them and their problem will go away. However, ignoring these notices will likely only get you into additional trouble, and doing so may even result in you having to pay hefty fines for late payments. You should then take appropriate action as soon as possible after receiving any kind of notice from the IRS.

### File Late Taxes as Soon as Possible

If you have forgotten to file your taxes and the tax deadline has already passed, it's critical that you file your taxes as soon as possible. While filing taxes late will still result in interest charges, if you file your tax return more than 60 days after the due date, you will also be charged a [minimum penalty of \\$205](#) (or 100% of your unpaid taxes if you owe less than \$205). Additionally, each month that you do not file your taxes, you will be charged a penalty of 0.5 percent of what you owe, and your debt will also accrue interest at a rate of 0.5% per month you do not pay your debt or apply for a payment plan. Filing your late taxes as soon as possible is then critical even if you cannot afford to pay what you owe in full right away, as this can help you to avoid racking up additional fines, fees, and penalties.

### Remember That Payment Options Are Available

If you discover that you owe a lot of money to the IRS, don't panic out of fear that you will have to pay this balance immediately, as you may qualify for a payment plan. The IRS [offers multiple payment plans](#) you can apply for that will allow you to pay what you owe over a period of months. It's important to note that the amount of time you will be given to pay off your taxes will depend on how much money you owe and which payment plan you pick. However, it's important to keep in mind that the longer you take to pay what you owe, the more interest you will accrue.

## You May Be Able to Avoid Penalties

If you find yourself facing hefty penalties for filing your taxes late, or because you owe back taxes, you may be able to get these fines waived. What many people do not realize is that they can ask for leniency, and in some cases, the IRS will waive penalties if you do not have a history of making late payments or missing the filing deadline. Additionally, the IRS may waive certain penalties if you can prove there was [reasonable cause](#) for not filing or paying your taxes on time, or if you suffered financial hardship. However, even if your penalties are waived, interest will still accrue daily until you file your taxes and pay your remaining balance.

## You Should Meet With a Tax Professional

If you find yourself in trouble with the IRS for any reason, it's critical that you meet with an experienced tax professional. They will be able to help you better understand your current situation, what your options are, and what steps you should take next to resolve your problems with the IRS. Additionally, if you have an IRS collections interview scheduled, you should meet with a tax attorney who can help you to prepare for your interview, and they will accompany you to the meeting to ensure that you are treated fairly.

The fact is that dealing with the IRS can be nerve-wracking, but having the right people on your side will make this difficult time as stress-free as possible. Contact us to learn more about how one of our tax professionals can help you to create a plan to get you out of trouble with the IRS while ensuring proper guidelines are followed.