



County of San Bernardino



Ensen Mason CPA, CFA • Auditor-Controller/Treasurer/Tax Collector

NEWS RELEASE – For Immediate Release

September 24, 2020

# TAXPAYER MAIL SCAM ALERT

**San Bernardino, CA** — San Bernardino County Auditor-Controller/Treasurer/Tax Collector (ATC) Ensen Mason today warned taxpayers of a recent mail scam to obtain payments from San Bernardino County residents. The fraudulent Notice of Intent to Levy Social Security Benefits issued by “J.S. Brown” reads in part:

*“This notice has been issued against the debtor [NAME], because of a lien filing due to the tax liability that has not been paid. This letter serves as a final judgmental notice. The Federal Tax Authorities can now take enforcement action such as seizing Social Security benefits and garnishing wages and bank accounts to satisfy the outstanding debt owed. If no action is taken by [DATE], the Federal Tax Authorities may permanently revoke benefits, suspend licenses, and levy any federal tax refund gained this year. Your debt must be resolved in full to remove the lien. To avoid enforcement, call [FRAUDULENT NUMBER] within fifteen (15) days of receiving this notice. Failure to respond in time will cause an additional penalty to accumulate and lead to default judgment.”*

If you or someone you know has received this notice, please do NOT call the phone number listed and do NOT send them any money. Property owners should contact the Tax Collector’s Office at (909) 387-8308 with questions concerning the accuracy of any claimed tax liens or outstanding property taxes due.

“Taxpayers are unfortunately subject to scam artists every year who claim county, state and federal tax agencies have fake liens against them,” warned ATC Mason. “I promised taxpayers in my campaign two years ago that I would do everything possible to shut these criminals down; and I have kept my promise. My office looks proactively for scammers attempting to commit fraud and abuse against San Bernardino County taxpayers, many of whom are elderly and have substantial assets. We blow the whistle on these criminals, and work with law enforcement to put them behind bars where they belong.”

Taxpayers should keep the following information in mind to help protect themselves against fraud:

- The Tax Collector’s Office will communicate with taxpayers directly regarding any outstanding property taxes owed. The Internal Revenue Service and Franchise Tax Board have similar processes of communicating outstanding taxes.
- The Tax Collector’s Office will notify taxpayers of its intent to file a tax lien in advance.

## CONTACT:

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www.MyTaxCollector.com  
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- The Tax Collector’s Office does not levy against social security funds at any time for any reason.
- The Tax Collector’s Office does not use an outside agency to collect any property tax liability owed.

Taxpayers who fell victim to this scam and provided payment to the scammers are encouraged to report the crime to their local police department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation at (310) 477-6565.

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