



DON'T TAX YOURSELF

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Tax Scammer Pleads Guilty

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The Internal Revenue Service has been warning the public for years about various scams that purport to be from representatives of the IRS and are really just criminals trying to scam the unsuspecting public. [Techniques used](#) include threatening unsolicited phone calls that often use caller ID spoofing to make the call appear legitimate. The best advice is to just hang up and not engage the caller, but these scammers have succeeded in scamming tens of millions of dollars over the past few years, often from the elderly.

It is difficult for law enforcement to track down these individuals, since many operate overseas and victims are often embarrassed to come forward. It is therefore refreshing when a scammer is finally caught and brought to justice. In federal court on June 26, 2019, [Ashokkumar "Andy" Patel](#), a 30-year-old Indian citizen, pleaded guilty to felony charges related to stealing almost \$700,000 in one of these phone scams. Patel could face up to 80 years in prison and deportation after completion of his sentence, though it is likely he will receive a mere 63-78 months in prison based on federal sentencing guidelines.

Hopefully this story will serve as a warning and a reminder that everyday people can get caught up in these scams.