

Client Alert: USPTO Spoofed Calls Scam

Beware Phone Calls Impersonating USPTO Employees

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July 27, 2023

A new type of scam that has emerged that companies need to know about involves calls impersonating USPTO employees. Individuals with malicious intent are taking advantage of technological advancements to engage in more subtle forms of scams. In the last few years, the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) has observed a significant increase of the new “spoofed calls” scam.

HOW TO SPOT USPTO SPOOFED CALLS SCAM?

The new scam involves spoofed calls, in which the caller manipulates the caller ID information displayed on your phone to make it appear as if the call is coming from an employee of the USPTO. In reality, it is a scammer seeking to obtain your personal information and finances through deceitful means. It is important to know that the USPTO mainly communicates via mail, email, and your personal online platform. Moreover, a legitimate USPTO agent will never request highly personal information or ask for your social security number or credit card details over the phone.

HOW TO RESPOND TO USPTO SPOOFED CALLS SCAM?

If the purported agent requests personal information such as your social security number or credit card details, do not disclose it. Instead, you can follow these steps:

1. Check your information and communication on your **patent** or **trademark** portal.
2. Contact the USPTO on the **patent** or **trademark** assistance center to authenticate the call.

If all clues suggest that it was indeed a scam, promptly notify the USPTO. If you have further doubts or questions, consult with your attorney for guidance.

HOW TO DEAL WITH THE AFTERMATH?

If you have already disclosed your information or made payments to a scammer under the false belief that it was the actual USPTO calling you, you should take immediate action. Keep any evidence you possess, such as emails, communications, receipts, and screenshots of transactions. Contact the USPTO’s task force responsible for investigations and reach out to your attorney to assess the potential impact of the scam on your application or registration status.

If you have questions regarding this phone call scam, please reach out to **Stacey Friends** or our **IP team**.

The author would like to acknowledge the contributions to this article by, and give thanks to, Agathe Sidot, Northeastern University School of Law (NUSL) 2023.

