

Frequently Asked Questions

If your money has been offset (held), the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) below will help you sort out what you need to know and who to contact.

Held Payments FAQ

Q1: Can the Offset Program hold my federal tax refund?

A1: No, the Offset Program does not hold federal income tax refunds. If your federal tax refund has been held, contact the IRS at **1-800-829-1040** or go to the IRS web site "[Where's My Refund?](#)" for more information.

Q2: I want to contact the agency that held my money. How?

A2: A listing of agency information is located here: [Agency Contacts](#)

Q3: How do I find out who is holding my money and why?

A3: If your money has been held, then you received a letter containing the name of the agency that held your money. **You must contact that Agency to find out why you owe the money.** The Offset Program staff does not have access to the details of the debt and cannot answer your questions about why you owe money. They also **cannot change your status within the program.** If you want to contact the agency that held your money, their information is located on our [Agency Contacts](#) web page.

Q4: Does the Offset Program staff know why my money is being held?

A4: No. The Offset Program staff does not know why your money is being held. The only information they received from the offsetting agency was your social security number or federal tax ID number and the amount of money owed. **No other information was provided to them.** You must contact the agency identified in your notification letter to find out why your money is being held.

Q5: I worked out a Payment Plan with the agency that held my money. Now that I informed the Offset Program Staff about it, don't they have to give me my money?

A5: No, because the Offset Program staff has no authority to release your money unless authorized to do so by the offsetting agency. It is the offsetting agency's determination to hold or release money that matched on the Offset Program, and **it is released only when that agency contacts the Offset Program staff and instructs them to release your money.** This requires the offsetting agency you have a Payment Plan with to contact the Offset Program staff to release your funds, **not the person who had money held.**

Q6: I want to appeal my debt. Who do I contact?

A6: If you want to appeal your debt or the amount of your debt, **you must contact the agency that placed you with the program.** Their agency name is located in the letter you received stating your money was being held. If you need agency contact information, it is located on the [Agency Contacts](#) web page. The Offset Program Staff does not have the authority to resolve these issues.

Q7: When should I contact Offset Program staff instead of the agency that held my money?

A7: There are two specific reasons why you should call the Offset Program Staff:

- 1) You filed a **Joint** or **Combined** tax return and your money has been held.
 - ⇒ If you wish to request a division of your tax refund, you should contact the agency that held your money or the Offset Program staff.
- 2) You received a **Notice of Held Warrant** instead of a payment.
 - ⇒ In this case, you can contact the Offset Program staff by email or phone to find out what agency is holding your money. The Offset Program Staff cannot answer your questions about why the payment was held because they do not receive that information, but they are able to direct you to the offsetting agency. The offsetting agency (the agency that held your money) will be able to tell you how much you owe and why you owe it. The agency will then contact the Offset Program staff with instructions on how to process the held payment.

When leaving a phone message for the Offset Program staff, speak clearly and slowly so your information is accurately noted. State your name, phone number (including area code), and your Social Security Number or Federal Tax ID number.

You may also email the Offset Program. Email is not considered secure, so **do not** include your Social Security number or Federal Tax ID number when emailing the Offset Program staff. To send an email, click here: [Offset Program Staff](#).

The Offset Program staff is unable to change your status in the program OR access information about why you owe money. You must contact the agency that held your money to discuss these issues.

Q8: What is a "state agency"?

A8: "State agency" means a board, commission, department, including the department of administrative services, or other administrative office or unit of the state of Iowa or any other state entity reported in the Iowa comprehensive annual financial report, or a political subdivision of the state, or an office or unit of a political subdivision. "State agency" does include the clerk of the district court as it relates to the collection of a qualifying debt. "State agency" does not include the general assembly or the governor.

Q9: I don't agree with the method of this program. Who do I tell?

A9: If you want to contest the validity of the right to offset, you can file a written notice of protest. Mail your letter to:

DAS-Legal Counsel, 3rd Floor
Hoover State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Authorization for this program is located in [Chapter 8A.504 of the Code of Iowa](#).