

USPTO WARNS OF NEW PHONE SCAMS TARGETING TRADEMARK FILERS

Hodgson Russ Intellectual Property & Technology Alert
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The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) recently issued a warning to customers about new phone scams targeting trademark applicants. The USPTO reports that it has seen an uptick in complaints from customers who have received fraudulent phone calls from scammers posing as legitimate employees of the USPTO.

The scam involves “spoofing” phone numbers so that the name, phone number, and location information displayed during the call appears to match that of a USPTO employee. The fraudsters, often located overseas, will then request payment or personal information from the potential victim—allegedly needed to process a pending trademark application. However, it is important to note that the USPTO will never reach out directly to an applicant who is currently represented by an attorney. Furthermore, the USPTO will never request payment over the phone.

In recent years, the USPTO has faced serious problems with solicitation scams targeting US companies carried out via email or letters sent through the mail. In 2018, the USPTO created an inter-agency task force to address trademark scams with the Federal Trade Commission, the Postal Inspection Service, and the Department of Justice. However, the problem persists, and it now appears that phone scams are becoming an increasingly popular tool for scammers.

If you believe your company has received a fraudulent communication from the USPTO or have questions regarding the trademark application process, feel free to reach out to [Neil Friedman](#), [Ryan McGonigle](#), or any member of our [Intellectual Property & Technology Practice Group](#).

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