

IRM PROCEDURAL UPDATE

DATE: 03/14/2025

NUMBER: ts-21-0325-0372

SUBJECT: Updates to Refund Research

AFFECTED IRM(s)/SUBSECTION(s): 21.4.1

CHANGE(s):

IRM 21.4.1.4(2) - Updated to include reminder for returned filed more than 21 days ago. Changes made to clarify information.

IRM 21.4.1.4(2) Note - Updated to include information for External Lead indicators. Changes made to clarify information.

(2) Probe to determine if the caller e-filed their return more than 21 days prior to the call or mailed a return more than six weeks prior to the call.

Reminder: If more than 21 days have passed since the taxpayer e-filed, see IRM 21.4.1.4.1.2.3, Researching Rejected IMF E-filed Returns, to ensure return was accepted by the IRS prior to beginning research for missing return.

Note: If taxpayers indicate they called the financial institution and were advised the refund was returned through the External Lead Process or a Bank Lead, check for External Lead indicators. Refer to IRM 25.25.8-2, External Lead Involvement Indicators, and IRM 21.4.1.4.6, External Leads Program or Other Questionable Refund Inquiries, for more information.

Reminder: Some e-filed returns are accepted before the **publicly announced start date** for accepting and processing electronically filed returns. This is done for testing the system. However, no returns are processed until the announced date, therefore no time frame calculation should start before the publicly announced start date for those early returns. All other time frame calculations should start on the date of the acknowledgement for the e-filed return. This **publicly announced start date** is also valid for paper filed tax returns. Do not conduct any required research on the account prior to the official filing date. Review time frames in paragraph (3) below.

- For current and prior two tax year inquiries, continue to paragraph (4) below:
- For all other prior tax year inquiries, determine if the time frame has been met per paragraph (3) below. If time frame is **met**, authenticate the taxpayer's identity and conduct account research to assist the taxpayer. See IRM 21.4.1.4.1, Locating the Taxpayer's Return, for additional information. For authentication procedures, see IRM 21.1.3, Operational Guidelines Overview.

If time frame is **not met**, advise taxpayer to allow the appropriate processing time frame.

Caution: It is extremely important to consider the refund statute expiration date (RSED) prior to responding to the taxpayer. Refer to IRM 25.6.1.5, Basic Guide for Processing Cases with Statute of Limitations Issues, for additional information.

- For inquiries regarding Economic Impact Payments, see IRM 21.6.3.4.2.13.2, Economic Impact Payments - Refund Inquiries.

IRM 21.4.1.4(4) Box 2 - Updated to include reminder for returned filed more than 21 days ago. Changes made to clarify information.

(4) For current and prior two processing year individual accounts, ask the taxpayer if they've checked on the status of the refund by using one of the IRS automated systems: Where's My Refund (WMR) on IRS.gov; IRS2GO (English and Spanish) for smart phones; or the Refund Hot line. Use the table below to determine your call resolution actions.

Note: If a taxpayer requests assistance with the IRS automated systems listed above, **do not** attempt to access the system for them. Instead, provide the taxpayer verbal instructions on where/how to obtain the status of their refund. If the caller is an unauthorized third party, do not refer them to the automated systems.

Exception: Regardless of the return processing time frame, if the taxpayer is calling in an attempt to stop a direct deposit for any reason, including an error in direct deposit information, and wants to flip the direct deposit to a paper check (TC 971 AC 850), follow procedures in IRM 21.4.1.5.7 (3), Direct Deposits - General Information. Remember to check for Refund Advance Product (RAL/RAC) indicators.

Reminder: For authentication procedures, see IRM 21.1.3.2.3, Required Taxpayer Authentication.

Row	If taxpayer's response is	Then
1	No, and the normal processing time frames have not been met.	1. DO NOT access the taxpayer's account or complete any research. 2. Provide the taxpayer with appropriate return processing time frames and information about our automated refund applications: ○ Where's My Refund? on IRS.gov, now includes a "refund status tracker bar" that will show you which processing status your return is in: a. Return Received – no projected refund date is

		given b. Refund Approved – the refund date depending on direct deposit or paper check mailing is provided c. Refund Sent – informs the taxpayer of the date the refund was transmitted to the financial institution, or the date a paper check was mailed ○ IRS2Go (English and Spanish), our free mobile application for smart phones ○ Refund Hot line - 800-829-1954 - toll free assistors provide only if the taxpayer does not have access to a computer or the internet 3. Before ending the call, on Individual accounts, advise the taxpayer that the best way to get the most current information about their refund is through the automated systems, Where's My Refund (WMR) on IRS.gov; IRS2GO (English and Spanish) for smart phones; or the Refund Hot line. They are fast, accurate and available 7 days a week from any computer or smart phone with internet access, and the information provided is specific to each taxpayer who uses the tool. Remind them that by using the automated systems, they would not have to wait on hold to speak to an assistor. Also, advise them that updates to the automated systems will depend on the account status, and whether required actions have been completed to release the refund. Automated systems are not available for business taxpayers. 4. Route them out to the automated Refund Hot line, transfer to extension 3158 for English or 3258 for Spanish. 5. If the taxpayer refuses to be routed to the automated Refund Hot line, ask the
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		taxpayer if they have any additional questions. If not, then thank them for calling and end the call.
2	No, and the normal processing time frames have been met.	1. Authenticate the taxpayer's identity and conduct account research to assist the taxpayer. See IRM 21.4.1.4.1, Locating the Taxpayer's Return, for additional information. Note: If, after research, it is determined the normal processing time frame has not expired, follow steps 2 -4 in the box below. Reminder: If more than 21 days have passed since the taxpayer e-filed, see IRM 21.4.1.4.1.2.3, Researching Rejected IMF E-filed Returns. 2. Before ending the call, on Individual accounts, advise the taxpayer that the best way to get the most current information about their refund is through the automated systems, Where's My Refund (WMR) on IRS.gov; IRS2GO (English and Spanish) for smart phones; or the Refund Hot line. They are fast, accurate and available 7 days a week from any computer or smart phone with internet access, and the information provided is specific to each taxpayer who uses the tool. Remind them that by using the automated systems, they would not have to wait on hold to speak to an assistor. Also, advise them that updates to the automated systems will depend on the account status, and whether required actions have been completed to release the refund. Automated systems are not available for business taxpayers.
3	Yes, and the normal processing time frames have not been met, and they received a response saying, "We received your tax	1. DO NOT access the taxpayer's account or complete any research. 2. Advise the taxpayer that you are unable to provide any additional information

	return and it is being processed," or "Your tax refund is scheduled to be sent to your bank on..."	than the information already provided by the automated system and provide the appropriate return processing time frames. - Before ending the call, on Individual accounts, advise the taxpayer that the best way to get the most current information about their refund is through the automated systems, Where's My Refund (WMR) on IRS.gov; IRS2GO (English and Spanish) for smart phones; or the Refund Hot line. They are fast, accurate and available 7 days a week from any computer or smart phone with internet access, and the information provided is specific to each taxpayer who uses the tool. Remind them that by using the automated systems, they would not have to wait on hold to speak to an assistor. Also, advise them that updates to the automated systems will depend on the account status, and whether required actions have been completed to release the refund. Automated systems are not available for business taxpayers. - Ask the taxpayer if they have any additional questions. If not, then thank them for calling and end the call.
4	Yes, and the normal processing time frames have not been met, and they originally received a response saying "We received your tax return and it is being processed," or "Your tax refund is scheduled to be sent to your bank on..." or other message regarding the refund status, but now the automated system returns a message indicating "no data available"	<i>DO NOT access the taxpayer's account or complete any research.</i> Tell the taxpayer: - The initial message is still accurate, we received the return, and it is being processed. Provide the appropriate return processing time frames. - The tool is updated no more than once a day – usually overnight. - They should wait and check the tool again tomorrow.
5	Yes, and the normal processing time frames have been met , and they originally received a	Authenticate the taxpayer's identity and conduct account research to assist the

	response saying "We received your tax return and it is being processed," or "Your tax refund is scheduled to be sent to your bank on..." or other message regarding the refund status, but now the automated system returns a message indicating "no data available"	taxpayer. Note: The automated systems may at times provide an incorrect response in error. Apologize for any inconvenience and conduct research.
6	Yes, and the taxpayer provides a 4-digit reference number that they got on one of the automated systems or a "take action" message was received but no reference number	1. Authenticate the taxpayer's identity and conduct account research to assist the taxpayer. See IRM 21.4.1.6, Internet Refund Fact of Filing (IRFOF), for further guidance, and Exhibit 21.4.1-3, Internet Refund Fact of Filing Reference Numbers, for a list of the most common reference codes. Exception: If IDRS research reveals UPC 126 RC 0, see the guidance in the (1) Table in IRM 21.4.1.4.1.2, Return Found/Not Processed, for guidance.
7	Yes, and the taxpayer was informed by the automated application that a change occurred to the refund amount for which the taxpayer needs additional information, or the taxpayer was provided with a call back number and 3-digit extension	1. Authenticate the taxpayer's identity and conduct account research to assist the taxpayer. See IRM 21.4.1.5.1, Refund Not Sent or Amount Differs, for additional information.
8	Yes, but the automated application "cannot provide any information" and it has been more than 24 hours since the taxpayer received acknowledgement of their e-filed return or 4 weeks since they mailed their paper return	1. Authenticate the taxpayer's identity and confirm that they are using the correct shared secrets on the automated applications (TIN, filing status and expected refund amount, in whole dollar amount). Once additional authentication is confirmed, provide correct shared secrets if applicable. Access CC FFINQ or CC REINF, if necessary. Do not provide any refund information, unless there is a TC 846 present. Do not continue with the steps below if the TC 846 status is provided. 2. Before ending the call, on Individual accounts, advise the taxpayer that the best way to get the most current

		information about their refund is through the automated systems, Where's My Refund (WMR) on IRS.gov; IRS2GO (English and Spanish) for smart phones; or the Refund Hot line. They are fast, accurate and available 7 days a week from any computer or smart phone with internet access, and the information provided is specific to each taxpayer who uses the tool. Remind them that by using the automated systems, they would not have to wait on hold to speak to an assistor. Also, advise them that updates to the automated systems will depend on the account status, and whether required actions have been completed to release the refund. Automated systems are not available for business taxpayers. 3. Route them out to the automated Refund Hot line, transfer to extension 3158 for English or 3258 for Spanish. 4. If the taxpayer refuses to be routed to the automated Refund Hot line, ask the taxpayer if they have any additional questions. If not, then thank them for calling and end the call.
9	Yes, and the normal processing time frames have been met	1. Authenticate the taxpayer's identity and conduct account research to assist the taxpayer. See IRM 21.4.1.4.1, Locating the Taxpayer's Return, for additional information. 2. Before ending the call, on Individual accounts, advise the taxpayer that the best way to get the most current information about their refund is through the automated systems, Where's My Refund (WMR) on IRS.gov; IRS2GO (English and Spanish) for smart phones; or the Refund Hot line. They are fast, accurate and available 7 days a week from any computer or smart phone with internet access, and the information provided is specific to each taxpayer who uses the tool. Remind them that by

		using the automated systems, they would not have to wait on hold to speak to an assistor. Also, advise them that updates to the automated systems will depend on the account status, and whether required actions have been completed to release the refund. Automated systems are not available for business taxpayers.
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Reminder: Where's My Refund cannot provide any information on Form 1040-X or Form 8379, Injured Spouse Allocation, claims filed after the original return. To check the status of Form 1040-X taxpayers must use the Where's My Amended Return (WMAR) application on IRS.gov. See (8) below for Form 1040-X information through automation.

IRM 21.4.1.4(10) - Updated to include reminder that a POA does not fall under Revenue Procedure 2010-16 and does not qualify for an address change update under Oral Statement Authority. Change made for IRM consistency.

(10) Address correction is acceptable over the telephone for release of an undeliverable refund freeze. See IRM 21.1.3.20.1, IMF and BMF Oral Statement Address Changes, for guidance. Ensure you are talking to the taxpayer and document the adjustment remark section following the procedures found in IRM 21.1.3.20.2, Oral Statement Documentation Requirements. If there is any reason to doubt the identity of the person calling, request the caller to submit the information in writing. See Section 5.04(3) of Rev. Proc. 2010-16, 2010-19 IRB 664 for information about how the IRS is orally informed of address changes.

Reminder: A request made by a POA does not fall under Revenue Procedure 2010-16 and does not qualify for an address change update under Oral Statement Authority. Advise the caller to file Form 8822, Change of Address, or Form 8822-B, Change of Address or Responsible Party - Business, as appropriate.

IRM 21.4.1.4.1.2.1(1) Box 2 - Updated to correct procedures for UPC 126 moved to MFT 32. Change made to clarify procedure.

IRM 21.4.1.4.1.2.1(1) Box 3 - Updated to correct procedures for UPC 126 RC 0. Change made to clarify procedure.

IRM 21.4.1.4.1.2.1(1) Box 8 - Updated to add procedures for Unresolved Taxpayer Protection Program (TPP Issues) for Correspondence and Loose Forms. Change made for missing procedure.

IRM 21.4.1.4.1.2.1(1) Box 12 - Updated to remove duplicate procedures in chart. Change made for ease of reading.

IRM 21.4.1.4.1.2.1(1) Box 13 - Updated to expand on identification of UPC 147 RC 4 cases and provide updated procedures. Changes made to clarify information.

(1) If the module shows the original return went unpostable during processing, determine:

Note: Business rules for unpostable (UPC) 147 reason codes (URC) 1, 6, 7, and 8 are obsolete as of January 2017. Instructions have been removed from the chart below.

Note: The time frames indicated below start from the unpostable cycle (**original unposting** of the transaction) of the active unpostable.

Row	If	Then
1	An unpostable condition other than UPC 126 or UPC 147 has NOT been corrected, whether viewable in CC UPTIN or not.	If available, use CC UPCASZ to notify the unpostable function of correction needed. See IRM 21.5.5.3.3, Responding to Taxpayer Inquiries on an Open Unpostable, for further guidance. Note: The IAT UP Histories tool can be used to leave a history item.
2	The UPC 126 RC 0 is closed with a URC of 0	- Advise taxpayer to allow 9 weeks from the closing date for processing. See IRM 21.5.5.3.4, Responding to Inquiries on a Closed Unpostable. - If 9 weeks have passed and refund has not been issued, see IRM 25.25.6.6.4, Taxpayer Protection Program (TPP) Issue Resolved - Refund Not Received.
3	An unpostable condition including UPC 126 or UPC 147 has been corrected and the closed UPC 147/126 resulted in a return moved to MFT 32.	See IRM 25.25.6.6, Non Taxpayer Protection Program (TPP) Telephone Assistors Response to Taxpayers, for procedures
4	The UPC 147 RC 0 is closed with a URC of 0	See IRM 25.23.2.7.3, Identity Theft Identified by Submission Processing, for more information. Advise taxpayer to allow 9 weeks from the closing date for

		processing.
5	Unpostable condition is an unresolved UPC 126 RC 0 and is not viewable on CC UPTIN and the normal processing time frames have not been met.	- Advise the taxpayer to allow the normal processing time frames in IRM 21.4.1.4, Refund Inquiry Response Procedures. - Advise the taxpayer that they should receive either their refund or correspondence within those time frames.
6	Unpostable condition is an unresolved UPC 126 RC 0 and is not viewable on CC UPTIN and the normal processing time frames have been met.	If the UPC 126 RC 0 posted to the account within 14 days of the date of the call, advise the caller that additional information is required to complete the processing of their return and to allow 14 days to receive a letter with further instructions. Advise the caller to call IRS at 800-829-1040 if they do not receive a letter within 14 days from the date of the call.
7	Unpostable condition is an unresolved UPC 126 RC 0 and is not viewable on CC UPTIN and the normal processing time frames have been met.	If the UPC 126 RC 0 posted to the account more than 14 days prior to the date of the call, see IRM 25.25.6.6.2 (3), Procedures for when the Caller has not Received or Lost the Taxpayer Protection Program (TPP) Letter, follow instructions under "NOTE" in paragraph 3.
8	Unpostable condition is an unresolved UPC 126 RC 0 and is viewable on CC UPTIN.	- For phone inquiries refer to IRM 25.25.6.6, Non Taxpayer Protection Program (TPP) Telephone Assistors Response to Taxpayers. Note: Do not use CC UPCASZ on UPC 126 RC 0. - For paper inquiries refer to IRM 21.5.1.4.4.1, Unresolved Taxpayer Protection Program (TPP) Issues for Correspondence and Loose Forms
9	The UPC 147 RC 0 unpostable remains open and it's been 8 cycles or less since the transaction went unpostable.	- Advise the taxpayer to allow 8 weeks for resolution and they should receive either their refund or correspondence within that time frame. - For paper inquiries, follow procedures in paragraph (2) below.
10	The UPC 147 RC 0 unpostable	When the contact is from the taxpayer

	remains open or is in suspense and it's been more than 8 cycles since the transaction went unpostable.	or authorized representative, send Form 4442/e-4442, Inquiry Referral, to Submission Processing using the Form 4442 Submission Processing Unpostable Referral Listing. Select category, "Refund" then select "SPIDT". Unpostable cases may not show the assigned IDRS numbers initially, however the referrals should still be sent according to the Responsible Campus. • Advise the taxpayer they should receive their refund or correspondence within 12 weeks. • If the taxpayer contacts us after the 12 weeks, follow the procedures in IRM 21.1.3.18, Taxpayer Advocate Service (TAS) Guidelines. • For paper inquiries, follow procedures in paragraph (2) below.
11	The UPC 147 RC 0 is closed, the return has posted to MFT 32 (TC 971 AC 111 present on MFT 30), and TC 971 AC 506 with "WI SP UPC 147" is in the MISC field on CC ENMOD and CC IMFOLE.	• When the contact is from the taxpayer or authorized representative, perform additional authentication per IRM 21.1.3.2.4, Additional Taxpayer Authentication. • If the caller passes additional authentication, send Form 4442/e-4442 to the SP IDT team at the site of the closed unpostable. Follow routing procedures in the bullet below. Select category, "Refund" then select "SPIDT". • See IRM 3.28.4.7 (2), Procedures for Reprocessing Deleted Returns - UPC 147 RC 0 Only, for routing based on the DLN of the return. • Include authentication results in AMS. • Advise the taxpayer they should receive their refund or correspondence within 12 weeks. • If the taxpayer contacts us after the 12 weeks, follow the procedures in IRM 21.1.3.18, Taxpayer Advocate Service (TAS) Guidelines. • If the caller cannot authenticate, provide the caller the toll-free appointment number, 844-545-5640,

		to schedule an appointment at one of the Taxpayer Assistance Centers (TACs), (Hours of operation: 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. local time; Hawaii and Alaska follow Pacific Time Zone). After authenticating, TAC assistants should then follow the guidance above. For paper inquiries, follow procedures in paragraph (2) below.
12	Unpostable condition is UPC 147 RC 0 and URC D (deleted) condition shows on CC TRDBV as "GUF VOIDED/DELETED" and no MFT 32 is present	Submission Processing Identity Theft (SPIDT) has deleted the return: - When the contact is from the taxpayer or authorized representative, perform additional authentication per IRM 21.1.3.2.4, Additional Taxpayer Authentication. If the caller passes, follow the guidance in IRM 3.28.4.7 (2), Procedures for Reprocessing Deleted Returns - UPC 147 RC 0 Only. - Advise the taxpayer to allow the normal processing time frames shown in IRM 21.4.1.4, Refund Inquiry Response Procedures. Note: Taxpayers inquiring about an account with an indication of "SPIDT STILL BAD" on CC TXMOD or AMS should be advised to submit their correct, signed paper return with all supporting documentation to the fax number/address shown in IRM 3.28.4.7 (2), Procedures for Reprocessing Deleted Returns - UPC 147 RC 0 Only. Normal processing time frames apply to the newly submitted return. - If the caller cannot authenticate, provide the caller the toll-free appointment number, 844-545-5640, to schedule an appointment at one of the Taxpayer Assistance Centers (TACs), (Hours of operation: 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. local time; Hawaii and Alaska follow Pacific Time Zone). After

		authenticating, TAC assistors should then follow the guidance above. For paper inquiries, follow procedures in paragraph (2) below.
13	Unpostable condition is UPC 147 RC 4 with or without Special Processing Code (SPC) 9. SPC 9 is displayed on CC TRDBV. Select "GUF VOIDED-DELETED" and then "CODES."	This is an indication of a return attempting to post on a deceased taxpayer account. Follow procedures in IRM 21.6.6.2.21.3, CP 01H Notice or Letter 12C Decedent Account Responses, for guidance.

Note: CC TRDBV will have the necessary information to identify which unpostable and reason code was used on the original return if the unpostable is no longer showing on IDRS.

Note: See IRM 21.5.5, Unpostables, and IRM 3.12.179, Individual Master File (IMF), Payer Master File (PMF) Unpostable Resolution, for complete instructions.

IRM 21.4.1.4.1.2.1(2) - Updated to move information for paper inquires from the chart and give direction for when AMS does or does not show the taxpayer has authenticated. Change made for ease of reading.

(2) For paper inquiries, if AMS **does not** show the taxpayer has authenticated, send Letter 109C, Return Requesting Refund Can't be Located or Not Filed; Send Copy, using an "***" to replace the taxpayer's TIN.

Your letter should include the following;

- Advise the taxpayer to call IRS at 800-829-1040. Include the hours of operation which are Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., local time, with the exception of Puerto Rico, which is 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., local time.
- Advise the taxpayer that the return has been selected for further review and that we'll need to speak with them to validate the information that was submitted.
- Close your case.

If AMS **does** show the taxpayer has been authenticated, forward the tax return using the instructions in IRM 3.28.4.7 (2), Procedures for Reprocessing Deleted Returns - UPC 147 RC 0 Only.

IRM 21.4.1.4.4(2) Box 2 - Updated to change link to Refund Trace Process. Changes made to clarify information.

(2) If research shows a refund has been generated and the taxpayer states they did not receive the check or direct deposit, use the following "If-And-Then" table to assist in resolving the issue:

Caution: Do not initiate a refund trace over the phone if there is IDT involvement on the account. See IRM 25.23.12.4.1, Telephone Inquiries Regarding Identity Theft Victim Assistance (IDTVA)Tax-Related Cases, for additional information.

Caution: Do not initiate a refund trace over the phone if there is RIVO involvement on the module. When providing a pre-populated Form 3911, verify all information is for the correct taxpayer. See IRM 21.5.6.4.35.3, -R freeze Overview For Accounts With Return Integrity Verification Operations (RIVO) Involvement, for additional information.

Note: Many U.S. Post Offices will forward the refund check if the taxpayer has a forwarding address on file with the local post office. If this is the case, advise the taxpayer to allow up to 6 weeks from the IDRS refund payment date for receipt of the check. If the check is not received by the end of those 6 weeks, follow normal refund trace procedures.

Row	If taxpayer states they did not receive a refund	And the date is	Then
1	TC 846 is present on the module and a paper check was issued	Less than four weeks (or nine weeks if it's a foreign address) from the mailing date. For current and all prior year IMF returns, the issue/ mailing date is found on CC IMFOLT on the line below the TC 846 as "RFND-PAY-DATE", and on CC TXMOD on the line below the TC 846 as "RFND-PYMT-DT>". For Business Master File (BMF), the issue/ mailing date is one day after the TC 846 date.	- Advise the taxpayer that the best way to get the most current information about their refund or begin a refund trace is through the automated systems, Where's My Refund (WMR) on IRS.gov; IRS2GO (English and Spanish) for smart phones; or the Refund Hotline. Exception: Self-service trace option is not available if filing status is Married Filing Joint. - Advise the taxpayer to call back when four weeks (nine weeks if it's a foreign address) from the issue/ mailing date have passed if a trace cannot be started on one of the

			self service platforms. For BMF accounts advise the taxpayer to call back if four weeks (nine weeks if it's a foreign address) from the issue/ mailing date have passed if check was not received.
2	TC 846 is present on an IMF module and a paper check was issued	Four or more weeks (or nine or more weeks if it's a foreign address) since the issue/ mailing date. For current and all prior year IMF returns, the issue/ mailing date is found on CC IMFOLT on the line below the TC 846 as "RFND-PAY-DATE", and on CC TXMOD on the line below the TC 846 as "RFND-PYMT-DT>".	See IRM 21.4.2.3, Refund Trace Process.
3	TC 846 is present on a BMF module and a paper check was issued	Four or more weeks (or nine or more weeks if it's a foreign address) since the issue/ mailing date. For Business Master File (BMF), the issue/ mailing date is one day after the TC 846 date.	Advise the taxpayer to file Form 3911, Taxpayer Statement Regarding Refund. See IRM 21.4.2.4.1, Form 3911, Taxpayer Statement Regarding Refund.
4	TC 846 is present on the module and the refund is a DD	The caller states they have been told by their bank that their refund was returned to the IRS. The caller may use terms such as, the bank returned the refund as a bank lead (External lead) OR I have a lead number (XXXXXX XX) OR the bank received an indemnification letter from IRS or the funds were requested/returned. Note: Due to timing, the account may not reflect the external lead process is in	- Follow the IF and THEN chart in IRM 25.25.8.7, Responding to Taxpayer Inquiries, or - If the conditions in IRM 25.25.8.7, do not exist, follow IRM 21.4.1.5.7.1, Direct Deposit of Refunds.

		progress. Do NOT refer the taxpayer back to the financial institution unless the External Lead IRM instructs you to do so.	
5	TC 846 is present on the module and the refund is a direct deposit (DD), a split refund or a Refund Advance Product (RAL/RAC)	Five or more calendar days since scheduled DD date Note: The scheduled date of a DD is found on CC IMFOLT on the line below the TC 846 as RFND-PAY-DATE, and on CC TXMOD on the line below the TC 846 as RFND-PYMT-DT>	• Verify the direct deposit bank by providing the taxpayer with the routing transit number (RTN) from CC IMFOBT. If necessary, also provide the bank name using the link in the note below this chart. • Ask the taxpayer if they have contacted the financial institution. If the answer is NO, advise to do so and give the account number and type indicated on CC IMFOBT. If the answer is YES, initiate refund trace per IRM 21.4.2, Refund Trace and Limited Payability, if appropriate. Caution: If the deposit is a split refund or if a Refund Advance Product (RAL/RAC), review IRM 21.4.1.5.7.1, Direct Deposit of Refunds, for additional information first.
6	TC 840 manual refund Note: If TC 840 carries a blocking series and serial number 9XXXX series	10 calendar days (30 calendar days if it's a foreign address) from the "RFND-PAY-DATE" on CC IMFOLT or the "RFND-PYMT-DT" on CC TXMOD,	Advise the taxpayer to file Form 3911, Taxpayer Statement Regarding Refund. See IRM 21.4.2.4.1, Form 3911, Taxpayer Statement Regarding

	with a Julian date less than 400, it is a "Dummy TC 840" and no actual check has been issued. Research for the SSN where the refund was issued.	either of which is located below the TC 840	Refund, for additional guidance regarding Form 3911. See exception below for taxpayers located in a disaster area.
7	TC 740 Undelivered Refund	no content	See IRM 21.4.3, Returned Refunds/Releases, for resolving undelivered refunds.
8	TC 841 Returned/Stopped Refund	no content	1. Determine cause of the refund stop 2. Attempt to resolve issue 3. See IRM 21.5.6, Freeze Codes, for resolving freeze releases. Note: Refer to Exhibit 21.4.2-3, Reason for Cancellation Codes and Generated Account Information, to determine the cause of refund cancellation.
9	TC 898/899 TOP Offset	no content	See IRM 21.4.6.6.1, Taxpayer Inquiries on TOP Offset.
10	TC 960 is posted and a refund has been issued	no content	• Research CC CFINK for receipt code "R" and advise the taxpayer to check with the POA of record for receipt of the refund check. • If the taxpayer has already asked the POA, follow the appropriate guidance above.

Note: If during the conversation it is determined the taxpayer did not request a direct deposit, refer to IRM 21.4.1.5.9.5, Taxpayer Expecting a Paper Check But Refund

Issued as Direct Deposit.

Note: If the taxpayer alleges preparer misconduct as the reason for non-receipt of the refund, see IRM 25.24.1.3, Identifying Potential RPM Issues For Telephone Assistors/Taxpayer Assistance Center (TAC) Assistors. In some situations, you may need to advise the taxpayer that the restoration of the refund to the taxpayer may become a civil matter between the taxpayer and the preparer.

Note: When sending a Form 3911 to the taxpayer, input the following history item on CC TXMODA:

Example: H,39112TP

Exception: If the taxpayer is located in a Presidentially-Declared Disaster area and the check is issued between 10 days before the disaster and 30 days after the disaster, a Form 3911 is not required. Oral authority should be taken from all taxpayers including those who filed a joint return.

Note: To find the financial institutions for specific routing numbers, use the link at Financial Institution Routing Numbers. If the number isn't found, advise the taxpayer to contact their return preparer.

IRM 21.4.1.6(2) - Updated to include information for External Lead indicators. Changes made to clarify information.

(1) Part of the IRS modernization initiative is to provide taxpayers with an additional method of accessing account information. Internet refund fact of filing (IRFOF) is an Internet application that provides Form 1040 series taxpayer access to the status of their refunds via the Internet. Taxpayers who visit IRS.gov can click on "Get Your Refund Status" on the home page to check their current tax year refund status. IRFOF will give taxpayers the option of selecting any of the last three tax years to check their refund status.

(2) The user must provide their TIN, filing status and expected refund amount, in whole dollar amount. After correctly providing these shared secrets, the application will display their refund status information.

(3) In some instances, the refund callback number will be provided, along with a unique 4-digit reference number, for further assistance. For example, IRFOF will provide the contact number 800-829-0582 if one or more math errors, or other conditions, are present on the account. IRFOF calls are handled like any other refund call. For reference number explanations, see Exhibit 21.4.1-3, Internet Refund Fact of Filing Reference Numbers.

IRM 21.4.1.4.6(3) - Updated to consolidate procedures. Change made for ease of reading.

(3) When an External Bank Lead is in progress, a refund trace cannot be input because it negatively impacts our partnership with banks that have returned funds and our ability to protect revenue. A refund trace is for locating lost/stolen refunds. An External Bank Lead where the taxpayer was advised by the financial institution the refund was returned to the IRS does **NOT** meet refund trace criteria and a refund trace should **NOT** be started.

If a Form 3911 is received, check for External Lead indicators in IRM 25.25.8-2, External Lead Involvement Indicators. If found **DO NOT** input a refund trace as the External Bank Leads program will either release the refund or refer for further compliance treatment which will include a notice. Take the following actions before closing your case:

Update AMS history or CII case note with the following information if found on Form 3911:

- name and contact information of the taxpayer
- name of the financial institution
- signature date of Form 3911

Use CC ACTON to update the activity field of the control base with **CWBNKLDPRG**. Close the CII case or the control base of a physical paper case. For physical paper cases follow procedures in IRM 21.5.1.4.10, Classified Waste, and destroy the Form 3911.

IRM 21.4.1.4.6(4) - Updated to consolidate procedures. Change made for ease of reading.

(4) If Refund Inquiry determines a refund trace has been started and the account meets the criteria described in IRM 25.25.8-2, External Lead Involvement Indicators, then update AMS Notes with the following information (if known):

- name and contact information of the taxpayer
- name of the financial institution
- signature date of Form 3911

Allow the trace to continue, when either the TC 720 or TC 841 is posted or a Claims Disposition Notice (CDN) is received, send the taxpayer a Letter 86C, refer to IRM 21.3.3.4.2.1, Use of 86C Letter- Referring Taxpayer Inquiry/Forms to Another Office. Advise the taxpayer: "The return or refund for which you requested a refund trace is currently under review. It may take up to 10 weeks to complete the review and for you to receive your refund or a letter regarding the review."

Use CC ACTON to update the activity field of the control base with **CLS2BNKLD**. Close the CII case or the control base of a physical paper case.

Note: A refund trace cannot be interrupted if the campus deadline to "DQ" the trace has passed. Per IRM 2.4.23.2 (5), General Overview for Command Code CHKCL/CHKCLR, CC TERUPC can only be done on the same day of input. If the CC CHKCL was input today and the TERUP can be completed (this action requires same day contact with the site that completed the input of CC CHKCL), then request they input the CC TERUPC. Once TERUPC is confirmed, contact the open Bank Lead control to advise that the trace was stopped. If trace was started over the phone, then close the trace control base, use **CLS2BNKLD** in the activity field.

Reminder: When sending letters to the taxpayer follow IRM 21.5.1.5.1(8), CII General Guidelines, and capture the "request completed" screen of the CC LETER request.

IRM 21.4.1.5.7(1) Note - Updated paragraph in linked IRM to review for instances when Master File will issue (if applicable) two direct deposits. Changes made to clarify information.

(1) Direct deposits are allowed on current and prior tax year returns, this includes IMF prior year original returns. As of February 2023, direct deposits are also available on tax year 2021 and subsequent electronically filed Form 1040-X, Amended U.S. Individual Income Tax Return. For more information, see IRM 21.5.3.4.18.1, Direct Deposit for Amended Returns.

Note: Direct deposits cannot currently be requested on a paper filed Form 1040-X, Amended U.S. Individual Income Tax Return. There are certain exceptions when a direct deposit may be issued on a paper filed Form 1040-X (i.e., math error on original return). Review IRM 21.4.1.5.7.1(4), Direct Deposit of Refunds for instances when Master File will issue (if applicable) two direct deposits.

Reminder: Bank account information cannot be updated via IDRS.

Reminder: According to the **Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes Act of 2015 (PATH Act) Section 201(b) which is codified at IRC 6402(m)**, the IRS cannot issue refunds, including applying credit elects, before **February 15** (15th day of the second month for fiscal year filers) for tax returns that claim the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) or the Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC). This applies to the entire refund, even the portion not associated with these credits.

IRM 21.4.1.5.7(2) - Updated to identify where Refund Product Code indicators are located on current and prior year returns. Changes made to clarify information.

(2) The Refund Product Code indicators, which include other Refund Advance Products (RAL/RAL), can be found on MeF Return Request Display (RRD) under Code and Edit values titled REF Anticipation Loan Ind. For Tax Year 2023 and prior, they can be found on CC TRDBV under the attribute of **Refund Anticipation Loan Code**. Treat Refund Product Codes 1-4 as a Refund Advance Product (RAL/RAC) and refer taxpayers to their tax return preparer or the financial institution. If there is **no** RAL/RAC code 1-4 present on CC TRDBV, the refund **should not** be considered a Refund Advance Product.

Refund Anticipation Loan Code	DEFINITION
0	NO FINANCIAL PRODUCT
1	PRE-REFUND ADVANCE PRODUCT - TAXPAYER CHARGED AN ADVANCE FEE - Refund Anticipation Loan (RAL)
2	POST-REFUND FINANCIAL PRODUCT (REFUND TRANSFER) - Refund Anticipation Check (RAC)
3	PRE-REFUND ADVANCE PRODUCT - TAXPAYER NOT CHARGED AN ADVANCE FEE
4	OTHER/NEW PRODUCT - Not meeting any of the above criteria
5	TEXT FIELD TO EXPLAIN OTHER/NEW PRODUCT #4

Note: Refund Product Elect Indicator: Identifies whether the taxpayer elected a Refund Product or not. Refund Product refers to a Refund Transfer or an Early Access Product that is obtained through the tax return provider at the time of tax preparation or filing.

Caution: # [REDACTED] #

IRM 21.4.1.5.7.2(4) Box 6 - Updated to remove incorrect procedures for if the taxpayer has not contacted their preparer or FI. Changes made to clarify information.

(4) Follow the procedures in the table below when a taxpayer requested a RAL/RAC which has not been received:

Row	If the taxpayer states:	And	Then
1	They didn't file the return that resulted in	no content	Refer to IRM 25.23.12.4, Tax-Related Identity Theft, for codes

	the RAL/RAC		to be input and additional information.
2	They were impacted by a data breach or preparer data breach	no content	Refer to IRM 21.4.1.4.6, External Leads Program or Other Questionable Refund Inquiries.
3	They requested the Refund Advance Product (RAL/RAC)	Did not receive the funds	• Provide the FI contact information and advise the taxpayer to contact the preparer or FI prior to initiating a trace. • Enter a narrative in AMS with the FI contact information given to the taxpayer. • Advise TP to call back if refund cannot be located. • See IRM 21.4.1.5.7 (2), Direct Deposits - General Information, for information on RAL/RAC criteria.
4	They have contacted their preparer or the FI	The taxpayer, preparer or FI requests proof of deposit and it has been 5 calendar days from the date of the direct deposit	Initiate a refund trace, see IRM 21.4.2, Refund Trace and Limited Payability.
5	They have contacted their preparer or the FI	The taxpayer, preparer or FI requests proof of deposit and it has not been 5 calendar days from the date of the direct deposit	• Advise the taxpayer the IRS cannot take any action until after 5 or more calendar days have passed. • Enter a narrative in AMS with the FI contact information given to the taxpayer.
6	They have not contacted their preparer or the FI	no content	• They must be advised to contact the preparer or FI prior to initiating a trace. • Enter a narrative in AMS with the FI contact information given to the taxpayer. • Advise TP to call back if

			refund cannot be located.
7	They want to bypass the RAL or the RAC due to economic hardship	no content	• Consider whether to refer the case to TAS. See IRM 21.1.3.18 (3), Taxpayer Advocate Service (TAS) Guidelines. • See IRM 21.4.1.3.1, PATH Act Refunds, for returns meeting PATH Act criteria. • See IRM 21.4.4, Manual Refunds, and IRM 3.17.79.6.4.2, Certifying Automated Clearing House (ACH)/Direct Deposit Hardship Refunds.

Reminder: See IRM 21.4.3.5.4, Returned Refund Check Procedures, for guidance to send the RAL/RAC to the IRS.

IRM 21.4.1.6(1) - Updated to change the title of the refund link on IRS.gov to match the wording which appears online. Changes made to clarify information.

(1) Part of the IRS modernization initiative is to provide taxpayers with an additional method of accessing account information. Internet refund fact of filing (IRFOF) is an Internet application that provides Form 1040 series taxpayer access to the status of their refunds via the Internet. Taxpayers who visit IRS.gov can click on "Get Your Refund Status" on the home page to check their current tax year refund status. IRFOF will give taxpayers the option of selecting any of the last three tax years to check their refund status.

IRM 21.4.1.6(3) - Updated to add the words "4-digit" to the first sentence to clarify that it is a 4-digit number that the taxpayer will provide from WMR. Changes made to clarify information.

(3) In some instances, the refund callback number will be provided, along with a unique 4-digit reference number, for further assistance. For example, IRFOF will provide the contact number 800-829-0582 if one or more math errors, or other conditions, are present on the account. IRFOF calls are handled like any other refund call. For reference number explanations, see Exhibit 21.4.1-3, Internet Refund Fact of Filing Reference Numbers.