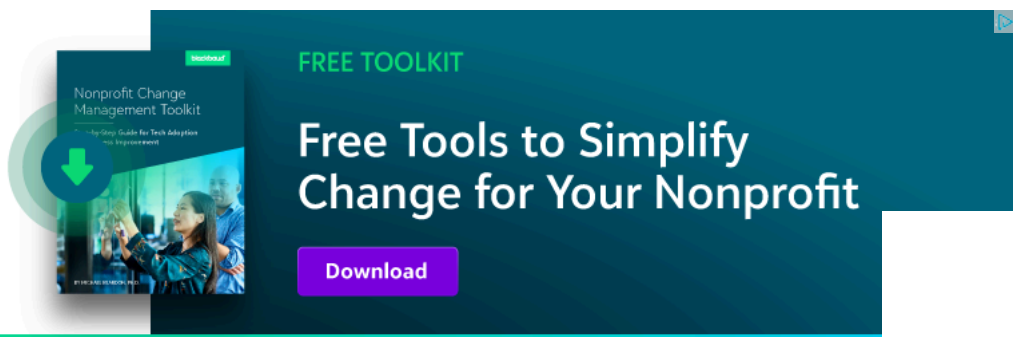


POLITICS

## Elon Musk's DOGE seeks access to taxpayer data at IRS: AP sources

blackbaud



A promotional banner for Blackbaud's Nonprofit Change Management Toolkit. On the left is the Blackbaud logo. To its right is a graphic of the toolkit cover, which features a woman in a blue shirt pointing at a screen. A green arrow points down from the cover to a purple 'Download' button. The background is a dark teal color with the text 'FREE TOOLKIT' in green and 'Free Tools to Simplify Change for Your Nonprofit' in white. A small 'AP' logo is in the top right corner of the banner.

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BY FATIMA HUSSEIN

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WASHINGTON (AP) — Elon Musk's [Department of Government Efficiency](#) is seeking access to troves of sensitive taxpayer data at the IRS, two people familiar with the inner workings of the plan who were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly told The Associated Press on Monday.

If successful, Musk and his group would have access to millions of tightly controlled files that include taxpayer information, bank records and other sensitive records. The people who spoke to the AP and requested anonymity said DOGE is specifically seeking to access the IRS' [Integrated Data Retrieval System](#), which enables employees "to have instantaneous visual access to certain taxpayer accounts," according to the IRS website.

Advocates fear that the potential unlawful release of taxpayer records could be used to maliciously target Americans, violate their privacy and create other ramifications.

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Harrison Fields, a White House spokesman, said in an emailed statement that “waste, fraud, and abuse have been deeply entrenched in our broken system for far too long. It takes direct access to the system to identify and fix it.”

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“DOGE will continue to shine a light on the fraud they uncover as the American people deserve to know what their government has been spending their hard earned tax dollars on,” he said.

Democratic lawmakers are trying to fight against DOGE plans to access IRS data. Sens. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., and Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., sent a [letter](#) Monday to acting IRS Commissioner Douglas O’Donnell, demanding copies of any memos that would grant IRS system access to Musk or DOGE. The senators are also seeking justifications for DOGE efforts to inspect tax returns and private bank records.

Along with fears that DOGE access to taxpayer data may not be legal, “we are also extremely concerned that DOGE personnel meddling with IRS systems in the middle of tax filing season could, inadvertently or otherwise, cause breakdowns that may delay the issuance of tax refunds indefinitely,” the letter reads.

“Any delay in refunds could be financially devastating to millions of Americans who plan their budgets around timely refunds every spring.”

Jan. 27 was the official start date of the 2025 tax season, and the IRS expects more than 140 million tax returns to be filed by the April 15 deadline.

The Washington Post on Sunday first reported on DOGE’s plans to access taxpayer data.

The news comes as the IRS plans to [lay off thousands of probationary workers](#) in the middle of tax season, according to two sources familiar with the agency’s plans who were unauthorized to discuss them publicly. Cuts could happen as soon as this week.

Previously, IRS employees involved in the [2025 tax season](#) were told [they will not be allowed to accept a buyout offer](#) from the Trump administration until after the taxpayer filing deadline, according to a letter sent recently to IRS employees.

Additionally, attorneys general from 14 states challenged the authority of DOGE to access [sensitive government data](#) housed at Treasury and exercise “virtually unchecked power” in a lawsuit filed Thursday.

The lawsuit, filed in federal court in Washington, says the actions taken by Musk at the helm of DOGE can only be taken by a nominated and Senate-confirmed official. It cites constitutional provisions that delineate the powers of Congress and the president.

A new account on Musk’s social media site X, called DOGE IRS, says, “DOGE is seeking help from the public!” The account asks users to reach out “with insights on finding and fixing waste, fraud and abuse relating to the Internal Revenue Service.”



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Hussein reports on the U.S. Treasury Department for The Associated Press. She covers tax policy, sanctions and any issue that relates to money.

