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If you own issued patents or trademark registrations in the United States, you are required to make certain filings with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) to keep your patents and trademark registrations alive. There are numerous companies unaffiliated with the USPTO that send solicitation letters to patent and trademark owners offering to assist with the payment of these maintenance fees. In addition, these companies may also reach out to offer services to register your trademark on private registries or to offer various monitoring services.

These solicitation letters look official because they are usually in the form of an invoice, and the information included is generally accurate because it is pulled from public databases. In addition, these solicitations come from businesses using names that resemble the USPTO's name and often include the words "United States," "Trademark," "Patent" or "Office," which leads one to believe that the companies are associated with, or are working on behalf of, the USPTO. Despite this appearance, however, these companies have no association with or connection to the USPTO. Many times the information provided in these solicitation letters is misleading and/or incorrect, and would require you to pay fees that are higher than the official USPTO filing fees.

The USPTO advises that all official correspondence sent by the USPTO concerning your U.S. patents and trademarks will come from the "United States Patent and Trademark Office" in Alexandria, VA, with a Zip code of 22313. If the USPTO contacts you by email, it will be from the domain "@uspto.gov." If you receive a letter or invoice from a different address or from an individual you have not authorized to act on your behalf, or if the request requires you to send a payment to an address other than the USPTO's address above, you may want to consider contacting your legal counsel to have them advise you on what steps should be taken, or contact the USPTO directly.

For more information on these solicitation letters, please visit <u>https://www.uspto.gov/patents-getting-started/using-legal-services/scam-</u> prevention/non-uspto-solicitations.

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FEATURED TOPICS

TRENDING

Designing Around a Patent as an Alternative to a License

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