



Tax Identity Theft occurs when an individual files a phony tax return using someone else's personal information, such as a Social Security number, to receive a tax return. It is the most common form of identity theft reported to the Federal Trade Commission. Here are a few tips, hints, and resources to help you protect your identity and prevent thieves from obtaining your personal information and hard earned money.

- Always protect your Social Security number and personal information. Do not give it out unless necessary and do not be afraid to ask why it is needed, how it will be stored and how it will be used.
- When filing your tax return electronically make sure to use a secure internet connection or mail your tax return directly from the post office.
- Enroll in the IRS Identity Protection PIN Pilot Program. If you filed your federal tax return last year with an address in Florida, Georgia, District of Columbia, Michigan, California, Maryland, Nevada, Delaware, Illinois or Rhode Island, you qualify for an IRS IP PIN, a 6-digit number that is assigned annually and adds a layer of protection for taxpayers who live in areas where tax-related identity theft is more prevalent. This IP PIN helps prevent the misuse of Social Security numbers on fraudulent federal income tax returns. If you choose to receive an IP PIN, you must use it for all future filings. Get your IRS IP PIN at <https://www.irs.gov/identity-theft-fraud-scams/get-an-identity-protection-pin>.
- If possible, file early in the tax season to receive your refund before identity thieves have the chance to file a false refund.
- Shred old tax returns and any documents with personal information.
- Be aware of phony 'phishing' emails identity thieves send out claiming to be representatives from the IRS or other establishments to steal your personal information.
- Know that the IRS will not email, text, or send any social media messages requesting your personal information. If the IRS needs any personal information they will contact you by mail. Make sure to respond to mail from the IRS in a timely manner.
- If you receive a call from someone claiming to be with the IRS, hang-up and call the IRS Identity Theft Protection Unit at 1-800-908-4490 to verify their identity.
- Remember to check your credit report annually at www.annualcreditreport.com for accounts that may have been opened in your name without your knowledge.

For more information about tax identity theft, visit:

The Federal Trade Commission
The Internal Revenue Service
The Florida Department of Financial Services

www.ftc.gov/idtheft
www.irs.gov/identitytheft
www.MyFloridaCFO.com/YMM