



## Security Awareness For Taxpayers

# TAXES. SECURITY. TOGETHER.

The IRS, the states and the tax industry are committed to protecting you from identity theft. Working together, we've made many changes to combat identity theft. We are making progress. The IRS is working hand-in-hand with your state revenue officials, your tax software provider and your tax professional. But, we need your help. We need you to join with us. By taking a few simple steps to protect all of your digital devices, you can better protect your personal and financial data online and at home.

### Please consider these steps to protect yourself from identity thieves:

#### Keep Your Computer and Mobile Phone Secure

- Use firewall and security software, set it for automatic updates;
- Treat your personal information like cash, don't leave it lying around;
- Use strong, unique passwords; consider a password manager;
- Use Multi-Factor Authentication;
- Give personal information only over encrypted websites - look for "https" addresses;
- Back up your files.

#### Avoid Phishing Scams and Malware

Identity thieves use phishing emails to trick users into giving up passwords and other information. Don't take the bait. Look for:

- Emails that pose as trusted source, i.e. *bank, taxprovider*;
- Emails with an urgent message, i.e. *update your account now!*, with instructions to open a link or attachment;
- Never download software or apps from pop-up advertising;
- Talk to family about online security, both with computers and mobile devices.

#### Protect Your Tax Return

Taxpayers who can validate their identities can obtain an Identity Protection PIN. An IP PIN is a six-digit code that prevents an identity thief from filing a fraudulent tax return using your Social Security number. Learn more at [www.irs.gov/ippin](http://www.irs.gov/ippin). If you are an identity theft victim and your tax account is affected, review [www.irs.gov/identitytheft](http://www.irs.gov/identitytheft).

**Avoid IRS Impersonators.** The IRS will not call you with threats of jail or lawsuits. The IRS will not send you an unsolicited email suggesting you have a refund or that you need to update your account. The IRS will not request any sensitive information online. These are all scams, and they are persistent. Don't fall for them. Forward IRS-related scam emails to [phishing@irs.gov](mailto:phishing@irs.gov). Report IRS- impersonation telephone calls at [www.tigta.gov](http://www.tigta.gov).