



7 Steps to Help Avoid Tax-Related Identity Theft

What is tax-related identity theft?

When someone uses your personally identifiable information, including your Social Security number, to file a fraudulent tax return to claim a refund or steal stimulus checks. Follow these 7 steps to help minimize your risk.

What to do.....

1. Get an Identity Protection PIN

An Identity Protection PIN (IP PIN) prevents an attacker from filing a tax return using your Social Security Number. Request an IP PIN here: <https://www.irs.gov/identitytheft-fraud-scams/get-an-identity-protection-pin>

2. File your Return Early

Once you've filed your return, a crook will not be able to file another return in your name.

3. Check for Fraudulent Submissions

Log in to the IRS website (<https://www.irs.gov/payments/viewyour-tax-account>) to confirm your taxes have not yet been filed on your behalf.

4. Protect your Personal Data

Password protect/encrypt information, create strong passwords (9 or more characters), use security software, use two-factor authentication and use separate email addresses for financial/legal and social engagement.

5. How does the IRS Contact Taxpayers

The IRS does not reach out to taxpayers by sending text messages, email or social media. If you receive an email, do not click the link, do not download anything. If you're concerned you may be missing important information, contact the IRS directly at 1-800-829-1040 to confirm the validity of any message you've received. When the IRS needs to contact a taxpayer, the first contact is normally a letter delivered by the U.S. Postal Service.

6. Know your Tax Preparer's Qualifications

Your tax preparer should have a Preparer Tax Identification Number and professional credentials, such as a certified public accountant (CPA) license. The IRS provides 10 additional tips for selecting your preparer at <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/ten-tips-for-choosing-a-tax-preparer>

7. As an OPEIU Member, You and Your Family Members Receive Complimentary Identity Protection through Identity IQ.

To enroll, go to www.OPEUIDProtect.com

If you are a victim of tax-related identity theft, contact Identity IQ today at 1-800-637-5680.