

SPOTLIGHT: INCOME TAX FRAUD

PROTECT YOURSELF DURING TAX TIME

When consumers think about identity theft, they often picture a scammer stealing someone's personal information to get credit cards or loans. But identity thieves can use your personal information in any way that you can including, to file YOUR taxes. Take these steps to protect yourself from income tax fraud!

WORK WITH THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE (IRS)

- **Did you receive a letter from the IRS?** Has more than one tax return been filed in your name or are they saying that you didn't report all of your earnings? If you are contacted by the IRS, be sure to follow the instructions in the letter. Time is of the essence; respond quickly!
- **Has someone misused your social security number or do you think you're a victim of identity theft?** If you know that a person has used your information, let the IRS know! Contact the IRS Identity Protection Specialized Unit at 1 (800) 908-4490.
- For more information on income tax fraud, visit irs.gov/identity-theft-central and irs.gov/compliance/criminal-investigation

OTHER WAYS TO MINIMIZE THE RISKS OF ID THEFT

- **Do your research!** Whether you are looking for an affordable tax preparer or filing your taxes yourself, you can learn more about protecting yourself from tax time predators [here](#).
- **Fraud alerts and security freezes, OH MY!** If you're a victim of identity theft, place a fraud alert on your credit report and consider a security freeze. A bit confused about what these things are? Visit our [Identity Theft Resources page](#) for more information on protecting yourself.



PHISHING TAX SCAMS

- **Be on the lookout for 'phishing' scams.** Scammers often try to solicit your personal information via e-mail or even text message. The fraudster may claim to be from the IRS to trick you into disclosing the information. Don't be fooled! The IRS will not contact you by e-mail or text message to ask for personal information.
- **Report a phishing scam.** If you know about a scam, call the IRS at 1 (800) 366-4484 or e-mail phishing@irs.gov.

For more information on protecting yourself from identity theft, visit www.consumer.sc.gov and click Identity Theft Resources.



South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs
293 Greystone Blvd., Ste. 400 • PO Box 5757 • Columbia, SC 29250
(800) 922-1594 • www.consumer.sc.gov

