

Stay Safe During Tax Season

Tip #1: Do your research!

- If you're filling out your tax paperwork with a professional, make sure you're working with a qualified, certified person or business.
- They should be registered with the Department of Business and Professional Regulation, and you should be able to confirm the business on SunBiz.org or MyFlorida.com.
- Filing online? Use reputable software. You can get all your forms from IRS.gov.

Tip #2: Submit safely

- If you're uncomfortable sharing sensitive personal information over the phone, meet with a professional in person.
- Send information with a signature confirmation or return receipt.
- If you're filing online, look for the "HTTPS" designation on web addresses; the "s" stands for "secure."
- Look for websites that have high ratings and use a two-factor authentication.
- Beware of emails that say you can get your money before you file, or websites that say you can get a credit card with your refund balance.

Tip #3: Keep your information integrity intact

- When you're bringing data to a tax preparer, make sure it's on a thumb drive that uses encryption.
- Shred papers with your personal data (SSN, account numbers, passwords, security questions, etc.).
- Ask the IRS for form 14039 for Tax Identity Fraud on your SSN if the return is rejected.
- Request a credit freeze if you don't plan on opening any new accounts in the near future.
- Never, ever, ever file or submit personal financial information on public Wi-Fi. Wait until you're on a secure, private connection.
- Make sure you're using strong, unique passwords or passphrases.

Physical Information

- Shred all papers containing personal data (SS#, acct#, passwords, security questions)
- Give only to qualified, certified persons or businesses
- Always send information signature confirmation or return receipt
- If you are uncomfortable giving information over phone, meet in person
- Careful to shred statements when throwing out
- Ask IRS for Form 14039 for Tax Identity Fraud on your SSN if return rejects

Digital Information

- Beware of emails that says they can get your money now before you file
- Beware of fake websites that say you can get a credit card with your refund balance
- Use reputable software if you do yourself (IRS.gov, 1040.com free site for info)
- If you brought data to tax preparer via thumb drive use encryption
- Look for HTTPS designation on web address
- Review website ratings
- Credit freeze
- Two factor authentication
- Use pass-phrase versus password
- Do not file on Public Wi-Fi