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By: Administrator

Tax identity theft is the most common form of identity theft reported to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) , and with the start of the 2014 tax season, the FTC named January 13-17 [Tax Identity Theft Awareness Week](#)

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Tax identity theft happens when someone files a phony tax return using your personal information, such as a Social Security number (SSN), to get a tax refund from the IRS. It can also happen when someone uses your SSN to get a job or claims your child as a dependent on a tax return.

The FTC provides tips to lessen the chance you'll be a victim:

- File your tax return early in the tax season, if you can.
- Use a secure internet connection if you file electronically, or mail your tax return directly from the post office.
- Shred copies of your tax return, drafts, or calculation sheets you no longer need.
- Respond to all mail from the IRS as soon as possible.
- Know the IRS won't contact you by email, text, or social media. If the IRS needs information, it

will contact you by mail.

- Don't give out your Social Security number (SSN) unless necessary.
- Research a tax preparer thoroughly before you hand over personal information.
- If your SSN has been compromised, contact the IRS ID Theft Protection Specialized Unit at 1-800-908-4490.
- Check your credit report at least once a year for free at annualcreditreport.com to make sure no other accounts have been opened in your name.

If you become victim to tax identity theft, the IRS typically sends a letter saying more than one tax return was filed in your name, or IRS records will show they received wages from an employer they don't know. If you get a letter like this contact the IRS Identity Protection Specialized Unit at 1-800-908-4490.

For more information about tax identity theft visit the [FTC](#) or the [IRS](#) websites.

The IRS has made identity theft and refund fraud one of its top priorities. According [Tax-News](#) the IRS has seen significant increase in refund fraud and will continue to see increases in 2014. By assigning 3,000 employees to work on identity-theft related issues, and training more than 35,000 employees, the IRS is working to prevent theft and fraud for the 2014 filing season.