

Tax-related identity theft occurs when someone uses your stolen Social Security number to file a tax return. You may not even know you're at risk until it's too late.



Protecting yourself from tax-related identity theft



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# Tax-related identity theft is a national crisis, but there are steps you can take to protect yourself and your family.

## Monitor your personal information.

- Regularly check your bank and credit card statements.
- Order your free annual credit report.

## Beware of impersonators.

- Do not provide personal information to callers you do not know.

## Careful what you post.

- Do not post personal or family data on social media.
- Stranger danger! Only accept friend requests from people you know.

## Protect your private personal info.

- Shred any documents that have personal information before throwing them away.
- Be very selective when sharing your Social Security number.

## Keep your computer secure.

- Use current versions of antivirus, malware protection, and firewalls and keep them updated.
- Use strong passwords, change them frequently and do not share them.

## Avoid phishing scams.

- Don't open attachments or click on links unless you know the sender.
- The IRS never initiates contact by email, text message or through social media.

## Be aware of cybersecurity.

- No sensitive tax or personal information should be sent via unsecured email.
- Always use a secure portal, encrypted email, or send sensitive information through the post office.

## So, you're a victim of identity theft? What now?

- Contact your CPA.
- Report identity theft to the FTC at [IdentityTheft.gov](http://IdentityTheft.gov).
- Contact a major credit bureau to place a fraud alert on your records.
- Close any accounts you didn't open.
- Respond to all IRS notices.
- Continue to pay your taxes and file your tax return.

The unfortunate reality is that personal data is already at risk everywhere. But your CPA can help! They can get you back on track should identity theft occur.

34.0%

of identity theft fraud is employment- or tax-related (FTC 2016).

3,050,374

identity theft and fraud complaints were filed in 2016 (FTC).

29.4%

of identity theft fraud is tax fraud. (FTC 2016).

1,093

data breaches and records were exposed in 2016 (ID Theft Resource Center).