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Identity Theft: Expanded efforts at IRS protect taxpayers and fight fraud



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Identity theft is a serious threat

- Federal Trade Commission hears from more than 20,000 consumers per week whose identities have been stolen
- Repercussions from identity theft are far-reaching; can include tax-related issues



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2013 successes

- Resolved and closed 963,000 cases of tax-related identity theft
- Suspended or rejected 5.7 million suspicious returns worth \$17.8 billion
- Issued 1.2 million IP PINs to protect taxpayers for the 2014 filing season



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IRS initiatives fight identity theft and assist victims

- Identity Protection Personal Identification Numbers (IP PINs)
- e-Authentication
- New program guidance addressing business identity theft
- Online fraud detection and prevention



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2013 updates strengthen IP PIN

- Current year IP PIN now useable on prior-year returns filed during calendar year
- Spouses use IP PIN when e-filing
- Easier to replace lost IP PIN
 - www.irs.gov/getanippin to retrieve **original** IP PIN; IPSU for a **replacement** IP PIN (800-908-4490 ext. 245)



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Pilot effort extended IP PIN use

IP PIN pilot program / e-Authentication

- Voluntary program for Florida, Georgia and D.C. taxpayers to opt-in to IP PIN
- Taxpayers who get e-file PIN through IRS.gov application get the offer
- Requires online registration and identity validation through e-Authentication



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Addressing business identity theft

Business identity theft:

Creating, using or attempting to use business identifying information without authority to obtain tax benefits

- New IRS program guidance focuses on research, identification, tracking and victim assistance



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Addressing business identity theft

Initial steps for victims:

- Report to local law enforcement
- Contact major business credit bureaus
- Contact all credit card companies, financial institutions and other creditors
- Respond to IRS notices immediately



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Mitigating online fraud

- IRS Office of Online Fraud Detection and Prevention investigates sites that purport to be the IRS, use its logos, etc.
- Works to mitigate risks to taxpayers
- Please report suspicious IRS-related emails to phishing@irs.gov



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OFDP efforts get results

- OFDP collaborates with other federal/law enforcement agencies
- In 2013, OFDP helped stop a \$160 million advance-fee scheme involving criminals around the globe



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Recent projects, partnerships

- SSN masking and 2D barcode system for IRS notices, letters – 20.4 million so far
- States' Suspicious Filers Exchange to automate referrals – \$8.5 million stopped
- Criminal Investigation/State MOU to exchange identity theft data, joint compliance efforts – 26 states to date



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You play a critical role

- IRS collaborates and exchanges info with other agencies and financial institutions to prevent identity theft
- We need your help to safeguard info and:
 - Educate the public to be more vigilant
 - Help businesses understand their role in protecting information



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Find more at IRS.gov

- General identity theft info at www.irs.gov/identitytheft, including Taxpayer Guide to Identity Theft
- IP PIN info at www.irs.gov/uac/The-Identity-Protection-PIN-IP-PIN (general info, IP PIN pilot, FAQs and online tool to replace an IP PIN)



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Other resources

- Business identity theft
 - <http://www.irs.gov/uac/Has-your-business-become-the-victim-of-a-data-security-breach%3F>
- Safeguarding info in your office
 - <http://business.ftc.gov/documents/bus59-information-compromise-and-risk-id-theft-guidance-your-business>