



Choosing A Tax Preparer

Because a client needs to share sensitive data with a tax preparer, be sure to carefully choose a tax professional. Consider the following tips in selecting a tax preparer:

- Investigate the preparer's history. Consider how long have they been in business and whether they are available outside of tax season;
- Ask how personal information is stored and protected;
- Research their reputation online. Check for complaints with the Better Business Bureau at [BBB.org](https://www.bbb.org);
- If the chosen preparer is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), verify their license with the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation at [MyFloridaLicense.com](https://www.myfloridalicense.com); and
- If the chosen preparer is an attorney specializing in tax issues, ensure the individual is in good standing with the Florida Bar and has no complaints against them at [FloridaBar.org](https://www.floridabar.org).

Florida Attorney General's Office Scams at a Glance: Tax Identity Theft

Visit [MyFloridaLegal.com](https://www.MyFloridaLegal.com) to find consumer tips or to file a complaint.

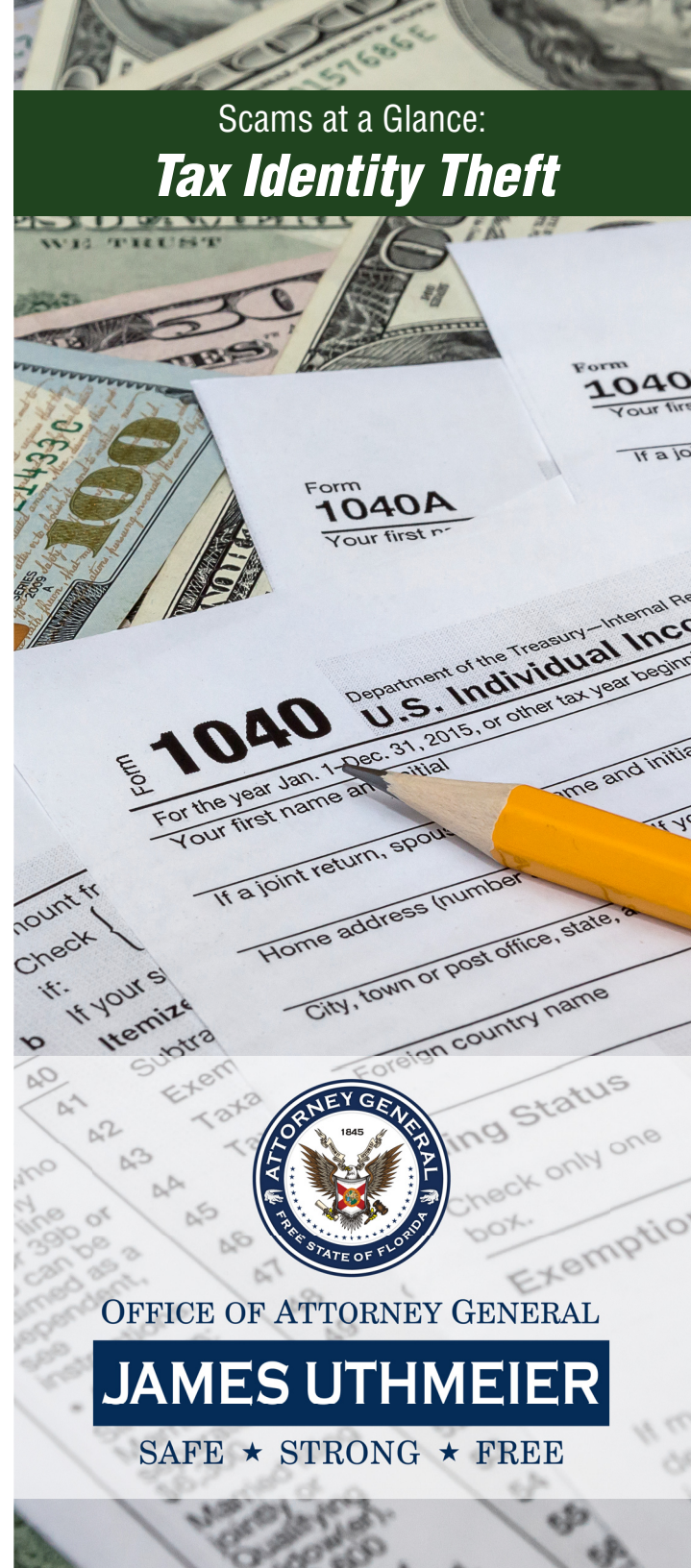
Report fraud by calling
1-866-9-NO-SCAM
(1-866-966-7226)

View other Scams at a Glance
resources at:
[MyFloridaLegal.com/ScamsAtAGlance](https://www.MyFloridaLegal.com/ScamsAtAGlance)

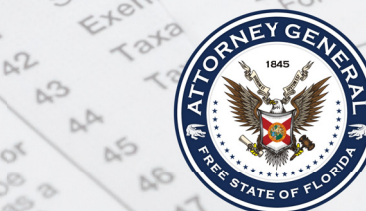
Office of the Attorney General
PL-01 The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1050

[MyFloridaLegal.com](https://www.MyFloridaLegal.com)

03/2025



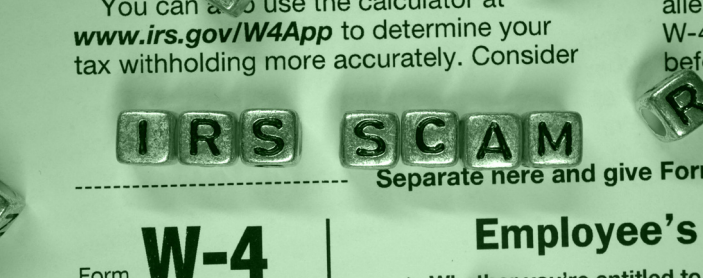
Scams at a Glance: ***Tax Identity Theft***



OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL

JAMES UTHMEIER

SAFE ★ STRONG ★ FREE



Tax identity theft can occur when someone other than the taxpayer:

- Files a fraudulent tax return using a taxpayer's Social Security number and personal information to receive a tax refund;
- Uses a taxpayer's Social Security number to get a job, causing problems for the victim when their reported income does not match IRS records; or
- Fraudulently claims a taxpayer's child as a dependent, preventing that child from being rightfully claimed by the taxpayer.

Red Flags

Some warning signs that a fraudulent tax return may have been submitted include:

- A notice from the IRS about a tax year that has not yet been filed by the taxpayer;
- Additional taxes owed;
- An unexpected reduction of a refund because of a delinquent debt; or
- Collection actions taken against the taxpayer for a year that has not yet been filed.

Stop Tax Identity Theft in its Tracks

Consider the following tips to help prevent tax identity theft:

- Be wary of a tax preparer that guarantees a larger refund than other preparers;
- Remember that the IRS does not initiate contact with taxpayers via email, text message, or social media. Only in rare circumstances will the IRS call; however, they will always send a letter first;
- File tax returns as soon as possible to prevent a scammer from fraudulently doing so first;
- When filing a tax return electronically, use a secure internet connection. Do not use non-secure, publicly available Wi-Fi hotspots like those at hotels and coffee shops;
- When filing via a paper tax return, mail it directly from the post office, not from home;
- Sign up for an Identity Protection PIN from the IRS. Should someone attempt to file a fraudulent return of a taxpayer enrolled in the IP PIN program, the return will be rejected or delayed until the taxpayer confirms their identity. Get an IRS IP PIN at [IRS.gov/GetAnIPPIN](https://www.irs.gov/GetAnIPPIN); and
- Never provide a Social Security number or IRS IP PIN in response to an unsolicited call or message.

Recover From Identity Theft

Anyone who falls victim to tax identity theft should complete the IRS Form 14039, Identity Theft Affidavit, at [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov) and attach it to the year's tax return. Taxpayers should also check their credit reports at [AnnualCreditReport.com](https://www.annualcreditreport.com) to ensure no fraudulent accounts have been opened with their information.

Additionally, anyone who encounters identity theft should file a complaint with the Florida Attorney General's Office at [MyFloridaLegal.com](https://www.myfloridalegal.com) or at 1-866-9-NO-SCAM (1-866-966-7226).

Form 14039 (May 2024)	Department of the Treasury - Internal Revenue Service Identity Theft Affidavit	OMB Number 1545-2139
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This affidavit is for victims of identity theft. To avoid delays do not use this form if you have already filed a Form 14039 for this incident.
Form 14039 can also be completed online at <https://www.irs.gov/dmef/form14039>.
The IRS process for assisting victims selecting **Section B, Box 1** below is explained at [irs.gov/victimassistance](https://www.irs.gov/victimassistance).

Get an IP PIN: We encourage everyone to opt-in to the Identity Protection Personal Identification Number (IP PIN) program. If you don't have an IP PIN, you can get one by going to [irs.gov/ippin](https://www.irs.gov/ippin). If unable to do so online, you may schedule an appointment at your closest Taxpayer Assistance Center by calling (844-545-5640). Or, if eligible, you may use IRS Form 15227 to apply for an IP PIN by mail or FAX, also available by going to [irs.gov/ippin](https://www.irs.gov/ippin).

Section A - Check the following boxes in this section that apply to the specific situation you are reporting (required for all filers)

☐ 1. I am submitting this Form 14039 for myself

☐ 2. I am submitting this Form 14039 in response to an IRS Notice or Letter received

• Provide 'Notice' or 'Letter' number(s) on the **line to the right**

• Check box 1 in **Section B** and see special mailing and faxing instructions on reverse side of this form.

☐ 3. I am submitting this Form 14039 on behalf of my dependent child or dependent relative (include that person's information below in Section C and D)

• Complete **Sections A-F** of this form. Do not use this form if dependent's identity was misused by a parent or guardian in filing taxes. This is not identity theft.

☐ 4. I am submitting this Form 14039 on behalf of another person living or deceased (other than my dependent child or dependent relative)

• Complete **Sections A-F** of this form.

Section B - How I Am Impacted (required when reporting misuse of Social Security Number (SSN) or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN))

Check all boxes that apply to the person listed in **Section C** below. If the person in **Section C** has previously submitted a Form 14039 for the same incident, there's no need to submit another Form 14039.

☐ 1. I know or suspect that someone used my information to fraudulently file a federal tax return

☐ 1/My dependent was fraudulently/incorrectly claimed as a dependent (use that person's information for Section C & D)

☐ My SSN or ITIN was fraudulently used for employment purposes

Note: If you are a victim of identity theft but it does not involve your federal tax return, you should request an IP PIN to protect yourself. [Get An Identity Protection PIN](https://www.irs.gov/ippin) | Internal Revenue Service (irs.gov)

Provide an explanation of the identity theft issue, how it impacts your tax account, when you became aware of it and provide relevant dates. If needed, attach additional information and/or pages to this form

AnnualCreditReport.com
The [only](https://www.annualcreditreport.com) source for your free credit reports. Authorized by Federal Law.

Home All about credit reports Request your report What to look for Protect your identity Frequently asked questions Contact us

Free weekly online credit reports are available from Equifax, Experian and TransUnion. Credit reports play an important role in your financial life and we encourage you to regularly check your credit history.

Request your free credit reports

Spot identity theft early. Review your credit reports.

Suspicious activity or accounts you don't recognize can be signs of identity theft. Review your credit reports to catch problems early.

Learn more about Identity Theft

PLAY > SPOT IDENTITY THEFT GOOD CREDIT DON'T BE FOOLED MORE THAN A SCORE NOT LIKE THE OTHERS