



## **WV Executive Branch Privacy Tip**

### **Tax Time Tips**



As you know, the Privacy Office occasionally issues tips to assist you in your “away from work” life. This tip is for that purpose.

Tax season is upon us, and identity thieves are already scheming to steal your tax refund. Here are some tips to help educate you about tax identity theft:

- File early in the tax season – if you can – to get your refund before identity thieves do. When you file, make sure you use a secure internet connection or mail your tax return directly from the post office to make it more difficult for thieves to get their hands on your personal information.
- Always protect your Social Security number: don’t give it out unless you have to, and always ask why it’s needed, how it’s going to be used, and how it will be stored.
- Shred old tax returns you’re no longer required to keep, as well as draft returns, extra copies, and calculation sheets.
- The IRS doesn’t email or text taxpayers for personal information. If you get an email that claims to be from the IRS, do not reply or click on any links. Instead, forward it to [phishing@irs.gov](mailto:phishing@irs.gov).

If you suspect your Social Security number has been stolen, or if you get a letter from the IRS denying your refund or suggesting that you failed to report income earned from an unknown employer, call the IRS Identity Theft Protection Specialized Unit at 1-800-908-4490. Report the suspected fraud and ask for the IRS ID Theft Affidavit Form 14039. If you are a tax identity theft victim, the IRS may give you a personal PIN number to verify your identity and protect your file going forward.

**Note:** Your agency/bureau/department/division may have specific requirements – always check your policies and procedures. If you have questions, contact your Privacy Officer.