

Tax-Related Identity Theft

An unexpected message from the IRS could be a tip off that an identity thief is misusing your Social Security number. Contact the IRS if you receive a notice that:

- more than one tax return was filed in your name
- IRS records show you were paid by an employer you don't know

Uncovering Tax-Related Identity Theft

Identity theft can affect the processing of your tax return in several ways. Most involve someone misusing your Social Security number (SSN), which the IRS uses to make sure your filing is accurate and complete, and that you get any refund you are due. An unexpected notice from the IRS could alert you that someone else is using your SSN:

- If someone uses your SSN to file for a tax refund before you do, the IRS might think you already filed and got your refund. You'll get a letter from the IRS telling you that more than one return was filed for you.
- If someone used your SSN to get a job, the employer may report that person's income to the IRS using your SSN, and the IRS might think that you didn't report all your income on your tax return. If so, the agency will send you a notice that says you seem to have received wages you didn't report – from an employer you don't know.

Dealing with Tax-Related Identity Theft

If you think you have tax issues related to identity theft, let the IRS know as soon as possible, even if you don't have any evidence that it's affected your tax return. Visit the IRS Identity Protection Specialized Unit [website](#) or call 1-800-908-4490, from 7 am to 7 pm (your local time).

Specialists will work with you to get your tax return filed, get you any refund you are due, and protect your IRS account from identity thieves in the future. You can document the identity theft by submitting a police report or the [IRS ID Theft Affidavit](#) (Form 14039). When you file the affidavit, you'll have to prove your identity with a copy of a valid government-issued identification, like your Social Security card, driver's license, or passport.

Other Steps to Repair Identity Theft

In addition to contacting the IRS, it's important to minimize the potential damage from identity theft:

- Put a fraud alert on your credit reports.
- Review your credit reports.
- Create an identity theft report by filing an [identity theft complaint](#) with the FTC and filing a police report.

Learn more about how to deal with [identity theft](#).

Avoid Phishing Scams

Some identity thieves send emails that appear to be from the IRS to try to get you to divulge your personal information. The IRS does not initiate contact with taxpayers by email, text or social media to request personal or financial 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.

Additional IRS Offices and Contacts

If you believe your tax issue can't be handled online or by phone, visit the [IRS Taxpayer Assistance Center \(TAC\)](#) near you.

Call the IRS Tax Fraud Referral Hot Line (800-829-0433) if you suspect someone is misusing your information to commit tax fraud. You also may submit Form 3949A (Information Referral) to report potential tax law violations to the IRS.

The Taxpayer Advocate Service (TAS), an independent organization within the IRS, helps taxpayers solve problems with the agency. TAS has at least one [local taxpayer advocate](#) in every state, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. You also can call the IRS's toll-free case intake line at 1-877-777-4778.