



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Division of Taxation

Contact: Ro Silva

Phone Number: 303.205.2961

Contact: Kathy Pugliese

Phone Number: 303.205.8203

Preventing Identity Theft Before and During Income Tax Filing

Denver, CO, January 13, 2016 – It is time to get ready to file your Colorado income tax return. As you make preparations, the first step is to protect your personal and tax data *before* and *during* tax return filing.

Criminals have access to an incredible amount of personal data from business and financial sources. While we are all vulnerable to identity theft year-round, it is especially important to be vigilant during income tax filing season.

What can taxpayers do *before* they file a tax return to reduce the potential of being a victim of tax refund fraud?

- Use security software with firewall and anti-virus protections. Use automatic updates. Encrypt your tax returns and other sensitive data. Use strong passwords.
- Beware of phishing emails during this time of year. Have you received a message from your bank or tax software company to update your account? A link may take you to a fake Web site that is designed to steal your log-on information. The attachment you open may include a program that allows a thief to get into your sensitive files. If you are in doubt, contact the bank or software company yourself.
- Beware of phone scams referencing a tax filing or tax payment. If you get a call from an aggressive or belligerent person who says you will be sued or jailed if you don't make an immediate payment, that person is a fraud. Clever criminals pose as trusted organizations. While the Colorado Department of Revenue may contact you regarding possible refund fraud, you may ask the caller to provide a name and office within the Department where they work. Department staff will provide their name and office name to you. Additionally, if you are still uncomfortable about providing information, you may hang up and visit the "Contact Us" page on the Colorado Taxation Web site (www.TaxColorado.com) to find the phone number of the office that contacted you.

(more)

Security · Compliance · Customer Service

Colorado Department of Revenue · Taxation Division · 1375 Sherman Street · Denver, CO 80203 · www.TaxColorado.com

- Protect your personal information. Treat your Social Security number, your driver license number and other personal data as you would cash – don't leave it lying around. Don't overshare on social media.

Taxpayer Security Awareness and Reporting Identity Theft

For tips on how you can avoid identity theft and what to do when you believe you may be a victim of identity theft, visit the Colorado Department of Revenue's Taxpayer Security Awareness and Reporting Identity Theft Web page: <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/tax/taxpayer-security-awareness-and-reporting-identity-theft>.

The Colorado Department of Revenue is committed to providing security and customer service to assist taxpayers in voluntary compliance with state tax laws.

#

Editors: The Colorado Income Tax News Media Guide for Tax Year 2015, which contains information on what's new with state income tax this year, filing tips and taxpayer resources, is now available on our News Media Web page: <https://www.colorado.gov/tax/media-center-taxation>.