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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Beware of Tax Scams & IDTheft on Tax Deadline



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Today is the last day to file tax returns on time and Attorney General Ashley Moody is urging taxpayers to take precautions to avoid falling victim to tax-related identity theft and scams. April 15 is the tax filing deadline for returns or requests for extensions to the Internal Revenue Service. Tax identity thieves will often prey on citizens who are in a hurry to meet the filing deadline and will target individuals up until the last minute. Thieves may call, email or text individuals to gain personal information, and may even pose as legitimate tax preparers trying to rush filers to access sensitive information under pressure.
Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “Please take precautions when filing your returns today. Identity thieves are relentless and will try to exploit the deadline to target Floridians rushing to file their taxes.”

The following tips should be taken to safeguard against tax fraud:

· Know that a mailed tax return must be postmarked by April 15 to be considered on time. Mailing the return directly from the Post Office during its business hours is the best way to ensure it is postmarked on time. A return mailed from home or dropped in a USPS box on the due date may not be timely postmarked;

· If filing electronically, ensure the internet connection is secure. Do not use unsecure, publicly-available WiFi hotspots to transmit returns;

· Filing electronically and selecting direct deposit is the quickest and safest way to receive a tax refund, according to the IRS;

· Taxpayers may file for an extension; however, this application is also due by April 15. It is important to note that an extension only applies to the filing of the tax return not the payment of taxes owed; failing to pay taxes owed by April 15 may trigger underpayment penalties or fees; and

· Know that the IRS will not call taxpayers and demand immediate payment using a specific payment method, such as a prepaid debit card, gift card or wire transfer. The IRS will not threaten to bring in local police, immigration officers or other law enforcement to have individuals arrested for not paying. Also, the IRS cannot revoke drivers' licenses, business licenses or immigration status. Threats like these are common scam artist tactics when trying to trick victims.

If a taxpayer receives a call from the IRS believed to be fraudulent, the taxpayer should report the call to the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration by filing a complaint online at TIGTA.gov or by calling (800) 366-4484.

Taxpayers victimized by tax-related scams can file a complaint by visiting FTCComplaintAssistant.gov. Taxpayers can also file complaints about tax-related scams and other types of fraud through the Florida Attorney General's Office.