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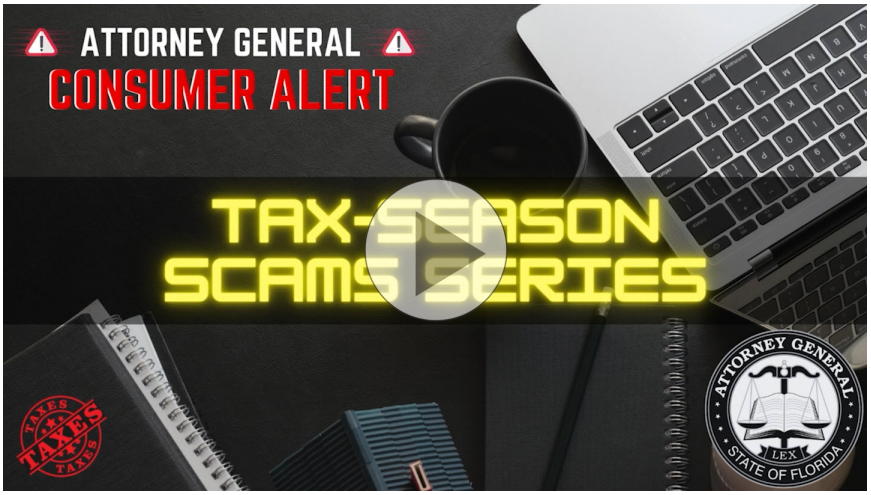
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

TSSS: Tax Identity Theft



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody is continuing the 2023 Tax-Season Scams Series with a warning for Floridians about Tax Identity Theft. In 2021, the Federal Trade Commission received 1.4 million reports of identity theft, and the FTC reports that the tax-filing season is the most common time for identity theft.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “Identity thieves love tax season and as we continue our series warning about common tax-related scams, I want filers to be extra cautious and take proactive steps to guard their personal information."

Securing personal information, both online and offline, is one of the best ways to guard against tax identity theft. Physical documents containing sensitive information should be shredded before being thrown away into the trash. If a personal shredder is not available, communities often host local shredding days. Utilizing multi-factor authentication, as well as incorporating strong passwords, can spoil an online scammer’s plan of obtaining personal information.

Attorney General Moody recommends these tips to avoid tax identity theft:

- File taxes early so a scammer can’t file using stolen information;
- Apply for an Electronic Filing PIN number with the Internal Revenue Service for increased safety;
- Never use the same passwords across multiple websites or applications;
- Limit the number of companies that receive personal information;
- Avoid filing taxes in public;

- Take sensitive outgoing mail to a post office location rather than placing in a home mailbox; and
- Protect an electronic device with firewalls and anti-virus software, and keep up to date with security patches and updates.

Anyone who falls victim to tax identity theft should complete IRS Form 14039, Identity Theft Affidavit, at IRS.gov and attach it to the year's tax return. Taxpayers should also check credit reports regularly to ensure that there are no fraudulent accounts opened with stolen information.

For more information on tax-related scams, or for more tax identity theft tips, check out Attorney General Moody's *Scams at a Glance: Tax Identity Theft* resource by clicking here.

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The Florida Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division issues Consumer Alerts to inform Floridians of emerging scams, new methods used to commit fraud, increased reports of common scams, or any other deceptive practice. Consumer Alerts are designed to notify Floridians about scams and available refunds in an effort to prevent financial losses or other harm caused by deceptive practices. Anyone encountering a scam should report the incident to the Florida Attorney General's Office by calling 1(866) 9NO-SCAM or visiting MyFloridaLegal.com.