



National Tax Security Awareness Week, Day 3: Choosing a special Identity Protection PIN adds extra safety for taxpayers

IRS YouTube Video:

- [Security Measures Help Protect Against Tax-Related Identity Theft](#) 

IR-2021-238, December 1, 2021

WASHINGTON — As part of a wider effort to increase security, the Internal Revenue Service today reminded taxpayers they can get extra protection starting in January by joining the agency's Identity Protection Personal Identification Number (IP PIN) program.

Anyone who can verify their identity can protect themselves against tax-related identity theft by opting into the IP PIN program. More than 5.1 million taxpayers are now participating in the IP PIN program, enabling them to proactively protect themselves against identity theft. The IRS has made recent changes to the program to make it easier for more taxpayers to join. The fastest and easiest way to receive an IP Pin is by using the Get an IP PIN tool.

Today's reminder marks the third day of National Tax Security Awareness Week, which runs through December 3. This annual observance is sponsored by the Security Summit, a partnership that includes state tax agencies, the nation's tax industry and the IRS.

The Security Summit was established in 2015 to protect taxpayers and the nation's tax system against tax-related identity theft. This unique collaboration between the public and private sectors has increased mutual defenses against criminals trying to file fraudulent tax returns and steal refunds.

One of the key features of the IRS system involves an IP PIN, which is a six-digit number assigned to eligible taxpayers to help prevent the misuse of their Social Security number or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number on fraudulent federal income tax returns.

An IP PIN is known only to the taxpayer and the IRS. Originally designed for confirmed victims of tax-related identity theft, the IP PIN program was expanded in 2021 to include any taxpayer, nationwide, who wants the additional protection and security of using an IP PIN to file tax returns with the IRS.

"When people have this special code, it prevents someone else from filing a tax return in their name," said IRS Commissioner Chuck Rettig. "The fastest way to get an Identity Protection PIN is to use our online tool, but keep in mind people must pass a rigorous authentication process. We must know that the person asking for the IP PIN is who they really say they are."

An IP PIN helps the IRS verify a taxpayer's identity and accept their federal income tax returns, regardless of whether they are filing electronically or on paper. The online Get an IP PIN tool at [IRS.gov/ippin](https://www.irs.gov/ippin) immediately displays the taxpayer's IP PIN. In each subsequent year, any participating taxpayer will then use the tool to obtain a new number.


The IRS urges any IP PIN applicant previously rejected during the identity authentication process to try applying again in 2022. The authentication process has been refined and improved, now enabling many taxpayers screened out in the past to have a better chance of passing the authentication process.

Before applying, keep in mind these key points about the IP PIN program:

- For 2022, the Get an IP PIN tool is scheduled to launch on January 10. It's the fastest and easiest way to get an IP PIN. It is also the only option that immediately reveals the IP PIN to the taxpayer. For that reason, the IRS urges everyone to try the Get an IP PIN tool first, before pursuing other options.
- No identity theft affidavit is required for taxpayers opting in. This means that anyone who voluntarily applies for an IP PIN doesn't need to file Form 14039, Identity Theft Affidavit, with the IRS.
- The IP PIN is valid for one year. This means that each January any participating taxpayer must obtain a newly generated IP PIN.
- Be sure to enter the IP PIN on any return, whether it is filed electronically or on paper. This includes any amended returns or returns for prior years. Doing so will help avoid processing delays or having the return rejected by the IRS.
- Anyone with either a Social Security number (SSN) or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) who can verify their identity is eligible for the IP PIN opt-in program.
- Any eligible family member can get an IP PIN. This includes the primary taxpayer (the person listed first on a tax return), the secondary taxpayer (on a joint return, the person listed second on the return) or any of their dependents.
- With one key exception, never reveal an IP PIN to anyone. The only exception is a taxpayer who uses a trusted tax professional to file their return. Even then, only share the IP PIN with the trusted tax pro when it is time to sign and submit the return. The IRS will never ask for an IP PIN. Remember to watch out: Phone calls, emails and texts requesting an IP PIN are scams.
- Identity theft victims should still fill out an ID theft affidavit. This means that any confirmed victim of tax-related identity theft still needs to file Form 14039 with the IRS if their e-filed tax return was rejected by the agency due to a duplicate SSN filing. The IRS will then investigate their case. Once the fraudulent tax return is removed from their account, the IRS will automatically mail an IP PIN to the confirmed victim at the start of the next calendar year. Because of security risks, confirmed identity theft victims cannot opt out of the IP PIN program.

Options for people who can't pass the online authentication process

Two options are available for people who cannot pass the IRS online identity authentication process. One involves filing Form 15227 and the other requires a visit to an IRS Taxpayer Assistance Center (TAC). Unlike the online option, both of these options involve, for security reasons, a delay in receiving an IP PIN.

Form 15227 : For processing year 2022, individuals with an adjusted gross income of \$73,000 or less and those married filing jointly with an AGI of \$146,000 or less with access to a telephone can complete Form 15227 and either mail or fax it to the IRS. An IRS representative will then call them to verify their identity with a series of questions. Taxpayers choosing this option who pass the identity authentication process will generally receive their IP PIN in about a month.

IRS Taxpayer Assistance Centers: Any taxpayer who is ineligible to file a Form 15227 may make an appointment to visit an IRS Taxpayer Assistance Center (TAC). Anyone using this option must bring two forms of picture identification. Because this is an in-person identity verification, an IP PIN will be mailed to the taxpayer after their visit. Normally, allow three weeks for delivery. To find the nearest TAC, use the IRS Local Office Locator online tool or call 844-545-5640.

The IRS, state tax agencies, the private sector tax industry, including tax professionals, work in partnership as the Security Summit to help protect taxpayers from identity theft and refund fraud. This is the third in a week-long series of tips to raise awareness about identity theft.

See [IRS.gov/securitysummit](https://www.irs.gov/securitysummit) for more details. Also, check out the most recent *A Closer Look* column on National Tax Security Awareness Week.