



IRS Security Awareness Tax Tip 2016-11: Tax Professionals: Monitor Your PTIN for Suspicious Activity

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IRS Tax Tips

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Tax Professionals: Monitor Your PTIN for Suspicious Activity

Tax preparers can help protect clients and their businesses from identity theft by checking their PTIN Accounts to ensure the number of returns filed using their identification number matches IRS records.

Criminals are increasingly targeting tax professionals, not only to steal client data but also to steal the professionals' data such as PTINs, EFINs or e-Service passwords. The IRS has teamed up with state tax agencies and the tax industry for a "Protect Your Clients; Protect Yourself" campaign to help increase awareness among tax professionals.

The IRS offers many preparers the ability to monitor "Returns Filed Per PTIN." This information is available in the online PTIN system for tax return preparers who meet both of the following criteria. You must have:

- A professional credential (Enrolled Agent, Certified Public Accountant, Attorney, Enrolled Retirement Plan Agent or Enrolled Actuary) or are an Annual Filing Season Program participant, and

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- At least 50 tax returns from the Form 1040 series processed in the current year.

It is important to monitor this information even if you do not prepare returns or only prepare a small number of returns. If there is no data shown, less than 50 returns have been processed with your PTIN.

To access “Returns Filed Per PTIN” information, follow these steps:

1. Visit <http://www.irs.gov/ptin> and log into your PTIN account.
2. From the Main Menu, find “Additional Activities.”
3. Under Additional Activities, select “View Returns Filed Per PTIN.”
4. A chart labeled Returns Per PTIN should appear.
5. A count of individual income tax returns filed and processed in the current year will be displayed.

The information in the Returns Per PTIN chart is updated weekly and it is important that you check this information regularly. If the number of returns processed is significantly more than the number of tax returns you’ve prepared and you suspect possible misuse of your PTIN, complete and submit [Form 14157](#), Complaint: Tax Return Preparer, to the IRS.

Watch for future [IRS Security Awareness Tax Tips](#). Coming soon -
- Reconciling Returns Filed with Your E-FIN.

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