

The Tax Specialists
Return Mail Processing Center
PO Box 6336
Portland, OR 97228-6336

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

Dear 

I am writing with important information regarding a recent security incident. The privacy and security of the personal information belonging to our clients is of the utmost importance to The Tax Specialists. As such, we wanted to provide you with information about the incident, explain the services we are making available to you, and let you know that we continue to take significant measures to protect your information.

What Happened?

We recently learned that a Tax Specialists email account may have been compromised. Upon learning of the issue, we commenced a prompt and thorough investigation. As part of our investigation, we worked very closely with external cybersecurity professionals. Since completing the extensive forensic investigation and manual document review, on October 21, 2018, we determined that some of our client information may have been contained in the potentially compromised email account.

What Information Was Involved?

We confirmed that your information that was contained in the email account that may have been accessed by an unauthorized party included your name, address, Social Security number, and may have included your date of birth and/or bank account information.

What We Are Doing.

We have no evidence that any of your information has been specifically accessed or misused. Nevertheless, out of an abundance of caution, we want to make you aware of the incident.

What You Can Do.

To protect you from potential misuse of your information, we are offering to provide you with a complimentary one-year membership in myTrueIdentity provided by TransUnion Interactive, a subsidiary of TransUnion. For more information on identity theft prevention and myTrueIdentity, including instructions on how to activate the complimentary one-year membership, please see the additional information provided in this letter.

This letter also provides other precautionary measures to protect your personal information, including placing a fraud alert, placing a security freeze, and/or obtaining a free credit report. Because your bank account information may have been impacted, we recommend that you contact your financial institution to inquire about steps to take to protect your account, including whether you should close your account or obtain a new account number. Additionally, you should always remain vigilant in reviewing your financial account statements and credit reports for fraudulent or irregular activity on a regular basis.

For More Information.

Please accept our apologies that this incident occurred. We are committed to maintaining the privacy of personal information in our possession and have taken many precautions to safeguard it. We continually evaluate and modify our practices and internal controls to enhance the security and privacy of personal information.

If you have any further questions regarding this incident, please call our dedicated and confidential toll-free response line that we have set up to respond to questions at [REDACTED]. This response line is staffed with professionals familiar with this incident and knowledgeable on what you can do to protect against misuse of your information. The response line is available Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Pacific Time.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
The Tax Specialists

– OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION –

1. Enrolling in Complimentary 12-Month Credit Monitoring.

As a safeguard, we have arranged for you to enroll, at no cost to you, in an online credit monitoring service (*myTrueIdentity*) for one year provided by TransUnion Interactive, a subsidiary of TransUnion®, one of the three nationwide credit reporting companies.

How to Enroll: You can sign up online or via U.S. mail delivery

- To enroll in this service, go to the *myTrueIdentity* website at [REDACTED] and, in the space referenced as "Enter Activation Code," enter the 12-letter Activation Code [REDACTED] and follow the three steps to receive your credit monitoring service online within minutes.
- If you do not have access to the Internet and wish to enroll in a similar offline, paper-based credit monitoring service, via U.S. mail delivery, please call the TransUnion Fraud Response Services toll-free hotline at [REDACTED]. When prompted, enter the six-digit telephone passcode [REDACTED] and follow the steps to enroll in the offline credit monitoring service, add an initial fraud alert to your credit file, or to speak to a TransUnion representative if you believe you may be a victim of identity theft.

You can sign up for the online or offline credit monitoring service any time between now and [REDACTED]. Due to privacy laws, we cannot register you directly. Please note that credit monitoring services might not be available for individuals who do not have a credit file with TransUnion or an address in the United States (or its territories) and a valid Social Security number. Enrolling in this service will not affect your credit score.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS REGARDING YOUR 12-MONTH COMPLIMENTARY CREDIT MONITORING SERVICE:

- Once you are enrolled, you will be able to obtain one year of unlimited access to your TransUnion credit report and credit score.
- The daily credit monitoring service will notify you if there are any critical changes to your credit file at TransUnion, including fraud alerts, new inquiries, new accounts, new public records, late payments, changes of address, and more.
- The service also includes access to an identity restoration program that provides assistance in the event that your identity is compromised and up to \$1,000,000 in identity theft insurance with no deductible. (Policy limitations and exclusions may apply.)

Special note for minors affected by this incident: The same services referred to above may not be available to affected minors. As an alternative, parents/legal guardians can check to see if your child may be a victim of identity theft by using TransUnion's secure online form at www.transunion.com/childidentitytheft to submit information so TransUnion can check their database for a credit file with your child's Social Security Number. After TransUnion's search is complete, they will respond to you at the email address you provide. If they locate a file in your child's name, they will ask you for additional information in order to proceed with steps to protect your child from any impact associated with this fraudulent activity.

2. Placing a Fraud Alert.

Whether or not you choose to use the complimentary 12-month credit monitoring services, we recommend that you place an initial 90-day "Fraud Alert" on your credit files, at no charge. A fraud alert tells creditors to contact you personally before they open any new accounts. To place a fraud alert, call any one of the three major credit bureaus at the numbers listed below. As soon as one credit bureau confirms your fraud alert, they will notify the others.

Equifax
P.O. Box 105069
Atlanta, GA 30348
www.equifax.com
1-800-525-6285

Experian
P.O. Box 2002
Allen, TX 75013
www.experian.com
1-888-397-3742

TransUnion LLC
P.O. Box 2000
Chester, PA 19016
www.transunion.com
1-800-680-7289

3. Consider Placing a Security Freeze on Your Credit File.

If you are very concerned about becoming a victim of fraud or identity theft, you may request a “Security Freeze” be placed on your credit file, at no cost to you. A security freeze prohibits, with certain specific exceptions, the consumer reporting agencies from releasing your credit report or any information from it without your express authorization. You may place a security freeze on your credit report by sending a request in writing, by mail, to all three nationwide credit reporting companies. To find out more on how to place a security freeze, you can use the following contact information:

Equifax Security Freeze

P.O. Box 105788
Atlanta, GA 30348
<https://www.freeze.equifax.com>
1-800-685-1111

Experian Security Freeze

P.O. Box 9554
Allen, TX 75013
<http://experian.com/freeze>
1-888-397-3742

TransUnion Security Freeze

P.O. Box 2000
Chester, PA 19016
<http://www.transunion.com/securityfreeze>
1-888-909-8872

In order to place the security freeze, you’ll need to supply your name, address, date of birth, Social Security number and other personal information. After receiving your freeze request, each credit monitoring company will send you a confirmation letter containing a unique PIN (personal identification number) or password. Keep the PIN or password in a safe place. You will need it if you choose to lift the freeze.

If your personal information has been used to file a false tax return, to open an account or to attempt to open an account in your name or to commit fraud or other crimes against you, you may file a police report in the City in which you currently reside.

If you do place a security freeze *prior* to enrolling in the credit monitoring service as described above, you will need to remove the freeze in order to sign up for the credit monitoring. After you sign up for the credit monitoring service, you may refreeze your credit file.

4. Obtaining a Free Credit Report.

Under federal law, you are entitled to one free credit report every 12 months from each of the above three major nationwide credit reporting companies. Call **1-877-322-8228** or request your free credit reports online at **www.annualcreditreport.com**. Once you receive your credit reports, review them for discrepancies. Identify any accounts you did not open or inquiries from creditors that you did not authorize. Verify all information is correct. If you have questions or notice incorrect information, contact the credit reporting company.

5. Additional Helpful Resources.

Even if you do not find any suspicious activity on your initial credit reports, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) recommends that you check your credit reports periodically. Checking your credit report periodically can help you spot problems and address them quickly.

If you find suspicious activity on your credit reports or have reason to believe your information is being misused, call your local law enforcement agency and file a police report. Be sure to obtain a copy of the police report, as many creditors will want the information it contains to absolve you of the fraudulent debts. You may also file a complaint with the FTC by contacting them on the web at www.ftc.gov/idtheft, by phone at 1-877-IDTHEFT (1-877-438-4338), or by mail at Federal Trade Commission, Consumer Response Center, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20580. Your complaint will be added to the FTC’s Identity Theft Data Clearinghouse, where it will be accessible to law enforcement for their investigations. In addition, you may obtain information from the FTC about fraud alerts and security freezes.

Maryland Residents: You may obtain information about avoiding identity theft from the Maryland Attorney General’s Office: Office of the Attorney General of Maryland, Consumer Protection Division, 200 St. Paul Place, Baltimore, MD 21202, www.oag.state.md.us/Consumer, Telephone: 1-888-743-0023.

North Carolina Residents: You may obtain information about preventing identity theft from the North Carolina Attorney General’s Office: Office of the Attorney General of North Carolina, Department of Justice, 9001 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-9001, www.ncdoj.gov/, Telephone: 877-566-7226.

6. Reporting Identity Fraud to the IRS.

If you believe you are a victim of identity fraud AND it is affecting your federal tax records (or may affect them at some time in the future), such as your attempt to file your federal tax returns electronically was rejected or if you received a notice from the IRS indicating someone was otherwise using your Social Security number, it is recommended you do the following:

- File an Identity Theft Affidavit (Form 14039) with the IRS. The form can be downloaded at: <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f14039.pdf>.
- Call the IRS at (800) 908-4490, ext. 245 to report the situation. The unit office is open Monday through Friday from 7 am to 7 pm.
- Report the situation to your local police or law enforcement department.

Additional information regarding preventing tax related identity theft can be found at <http://www.irs.gov/uac/Identity-Protection>.

7. Reporting Identity Fraud to the Social Security Administration.

If you believe that you are a victim of identity fraud AND it is affecting your Social Security account or records, you may contact the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213 or visit https://secure.ssa.gov/acu/IPS_INTR/blockaccess. You also may review earnings posted to your record on your Social Security Statement on www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount.

- The Social Security Administration has published Identity Theft and Your Social Security Number at: <https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10064.pdf>.