



The Privacy Pulse

OFFICE OF THE SENIOR OFFICIAL FOR PRIVACY

<http://oma.od.nih.gov/ms/privacy> | <http://oma.nih.gov/dms/programs/privacy/SitePages/Home.aspx>

Greetings from the NIH Office of the Senior Official for Privacy! The purpose of this February 2013 *Privacy Pulse* is to remind you to protect your personally identifiable information (PII) during the tax-filing season and to always encrypt outbound e-mail that contains PII and sensitive information using the [NIH Secure Email & File Transfer Service](#). This includes emails you send to your own personal e-mail account (i.e., Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo!).



The Federal Trade Commission, the nation's consumer protection agency, reminds consumers to be aware of the threat of identity theft. Your tax return contains sensitive personal information, and scammers can use your Social Security Number to get a job, or to collect your tax refund.

The NIH Data Loss Prevention Team has noticed numerous outbound, unencrypted emails that contain tax information, including PDF copies of W-2s and Tax Returns. Given the sensitivity of these documents, do not use IT resources to prepare your 2013 tax returns.

- Comply with [NIH Policy 2806, Limited Authorized Personal Use of NIH IT Resources](#);
- Make sure that anyone who helps to prepare your taxes is trustworthy;
- File taxes early in the tax season to reduce the window of time in which a thief could fraudulently file their own return using your Social Security Number; and,
- If filing electronically, only submit forms through a secure (https://) Internet connection.

Questions about IT policy? Contact the OCIO/ISAO at nihisaopolicy@mail.nih.gov

Questions about privacy? Contact the OSOP at privacy@mail.nih.gov or (301) 451-3426.

[FTC Website Tips to Prevent Identity Theft](#)