



Department of
Taxation

Ohio Income Tax Filing Season Opens on January 23

COLUMBUS, Ohio – January 18, 2017 – Ohio taxpayers may file their 2016 state income tax returns with the opening of the income tax filing season on January 23.

Again this year, the top priority for the Ohio Department of Taxation is to ensure that taxpayers' personal and tax information remain secure as criminals step up attempts across the internet to steal income tax refunds by filing fraudulent returns.

Tax Commissioner Joe Testa said the department will continue using an Identity Confirmation Quiz to help verify the legitimacy of a refund request. The quiz and increased awareness of taxpayers, tax preparers, the financial community, the IRS and Taxation staff, has helped repel cyber-criminals.

This year, taxpayers are being asked to provide driver's license or state ID card information for the primary taxpayer and spouse (if married filing jointly) to help combat stolen-identity tax fraud. Taxpayers who do not have the requested identification will have the option to indicate such and still be allowed to e-file.

Since June 2014, the Ohio Department of Taxation has blocked more than \$500 million in attempted theft of income tax refunds. Despite increases in fraud attempts, the amount of money requested on fraudulent tax returns has declined significantly.

Tax Commissioner Testa said this year's income tax filing process features the following changes:

- The **business income deduction** for 2016 has been increased to 100 percent of the first \$250,000 of net business income from "pass-through" businesses. Income over that amount from these businesses will remain subject to a flat 3% tax rate.
- Ohio has added a deduction for contributions to Ohio's **STABLE Account** to help taxpayers who are caring for a disabled child or other designated disabled beneficiary. This deduction allows taxpayers to reduce their taxable gross income by up to \$2,000 per beneficiary per year.
- **Indexing of income brackets** which protects Ohioans from the impact of inflation on their personal income tax rates resumes in 2016 at the conclusion of the phase-in of the Governor's previous personal income tax rate reductions.

Taxpayers should consider filing their state income tax returns using Ohio I-File, which is fast, easy and free to use. Most I-File filers receive their refunds in about 15 business days by direct deposit as opposed to eight to 10 weeks for paper returns.

Thank you to all Ohio taxpayers for their time and diligence in filing their annual state income tax returns. If you have additional questions, please visit our Web site at tax.ohio.gov or call 1-800-282-1780 for taxpayer assistance.

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