



Rhode Island Department of Revenue

Division of Taxation

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TAX ADMINISTRATION

ADVISORY FOR TAX PROFESSIONALS
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Tax preparers cautioned about new scam involving tax software

Cybercriminals use scheme to access tax preparers' accounts and steal client information

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – The Rhode Island Division of Taxation, the Internal Revenue Service, tax agencies from other states, and the tax industry today warned tax professionals to be alert to a new phishing email scam impersonating software providers.



The scam email comes with the subject line, “Access Locked.” It tells recipients that access to their tax preparation software accounts has been “suspended due to errors in your security details.” The scam email asks the tax professional to address the issue by using an “unlock” link provided in the email.

However, the link will take the tax professional to a fake web page, where they are asked to enter their user name and password.

Instead of unlocking accounts, the tax professionals actually are inadvertently providing their information to cybercriminals who use the stolen credentials to access the preparers' accounts and to steal client information.

The Security Summit partners – including the IRS, state tax agencies, and the nation's tax community – remind tax professionals and taxpayers to never open a link or an attachment from a suspicious email. These scams can increase during the tax season. Tax professionals can review additional tips to protect clients and themselves at the Security Summit's awareness campaign: <https://www.irs.gov/individuals/protect-your-clients-protect-yourself>. Tax professionals who receive such scam emails should send the scam emails to their tax software provider. Windows users should use the following procedure:

1. Use “Save As” to save the scam. Under “save as type” in the drop down menu, select “plain text” and save to your desktop. Do not click on any links.
2. Open a new email and attach this saved email as a file.
3. Send your new email containing the attachment to your tax software provider and copy Phishing@IRS.gov.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To reach the Rhode Island Division of Taxation, call the Division's main phone line at (401) 574-8829. The Division is normally open to the public from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. business days, and is located at One Capitol Hill in Providence, in the Powers Building, which is diagonally across Smith Street from the State House. For forms, instructions, and other information, see the Division website: www.tax.ri.gov. For a list of phone numbers and email addresses of specific sections within the agency, see: www.tax.ri.gov/contact/