

H&R Block Launches Online Fraud Resource Center Detailing Tax Fraud, Solutions

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Tax Identity Theft, Improper Payments Cost Country Billions of Dollars Annually

KANSAS CITY, MO -- (Marketwired) -- 03/02/15 -- To kick off [National Consumer Protection Week](#), H&R Block (NYSE: HRB), the world's largest consumer tax preparation company, has launched an [online fraud resource center](#) detailing various tax fraud scams and improper payment issues while highlighting ways taxpayers can protect themselves and offering solutions.

The Fraud Resource Center includes [more than a dozen white papers, studies, announcements](#) and more from the company and federal government organizations to help consumers, media and policymakers understand the issues associated with tax identity theft, tax fraud and improper payments.

"These are issues that plague the American tax system," said Bill Cobb, president and CEO of H&R Block. "No one is immune. H&R Block is pleased to offer this resource to help educate people about what can be done to combat tax fraud and improper payments."

In 2013, more than \$5 billion in tax refunds was sent to fraudsters, impacting more than 1.6 million tax filers. The IRS estimates that amount could increase to more than \$20 billion in 2016. Last year, an additional \$16 billion to \$19 billion was estimated to have been improperly paid to those claiming the Earned Income Tax Credit -- a refundable tax credit designed to help low- to moderate-income taxpayers.

Salient solutions

H&R Block is the industry leader in training its tax professionals in tax theory, tax practice and ethics. In addition, its online tools have built-in systems designed to reduce the chance of fraudulent tax returns. For example, all online clients must log in using two-factor authentication and must have an accepted federal return before electronically filing a state return.

This year, the company also introduced the tax preparation industry's first tax identity protection service specific to tax identity fraud. [Tax Identity Shield\(SM\)](#) offers unique protections that provide clients with tools to reduce the risk of tax identity theft, as well as resolution services if a client becomes a victim of tax identify theft.

Tax fraud affects all Americans in some way -- whether they become a victim, deal with service delays or ultimately pay the price as federal and state agencies continually battle fraudsters or distribute ill-gotten refunds.

"H&R Block will not sit idly by as our clients and millions of taxpayers suffer from tax fraud," Cobb said. "We know there are solutions to help reduce this risk and combat this growing problem. We look forward to working with the IRS, Department of the Treasury as well as other tax preparation providers to put an end to this problem."

To learn more about tax identity theft, improper payments and steps the government, tax preparation industry and individual consumers can take to prevent fraud, taxpayers should visit H&R Block's online fraud resource center at <http://newsroom.hrblock.com/fraud-center>.

About H&R Block

H&R Block, Inc. (NYSE: HRB) is the world's largest consumer tax services provider. More than 650 million tax returns have been prepared worldwide by and through H&R Block since 1955. In fiscal 2014, H&R Block had annual revenues over \$3.0 billion with 24.2 million tax returns prepared worldwide. Tax return preparation services are provided by professional tax preparers in approximately 12,000 company-owned and franchise retail tax offices worldwide, and through H&R Block tax software products. H&R Block Bank provides affordable banking products and services. For

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