

H&R Block Unveils Tax Identity Shield(SM) to Help Protect, Assist Consumers

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First and Only Tax Identity Theft Protection and Restoration Assistance Product of Its Kind

KANSAS CITY, MO -- (Marketwired) -- 01/26/15 -- At a time when tax identity theft is on the rise, H&R Block (NYSE: HRB), the world's largest consumer tax services provider, joins with Equifax Inc. (NYSE: EFX) to offer its clients the industry's first product specifically directed to helping protect against tax identity theft, the [Tax Identity ShieldSM](#). While there are other identity-monitoring services available, none is specifically directed to helping protect against the growing problem of tax identity theft. Yet, since 2010, approximately 3 million taxpayers have fallen victim to criminals using personal identity information to file a fraudulent tax return and steal refunds from the IRS. Tax Identity ShieldSM will offer tools, resources and assistance designed to help reduce risk, promote awareness, and mitigate fallout, including assistance with restoration of the consumer's tax identity.

"As a company we look at our clients' lives through taxes and find ways we can help," said Mark Ciaramitaro, vice president of innovation for H&R Block. "Tax identity theft is one of the top concerns this time of year. Through Tax Identity Shield, which is offered exclusively by H&R Block to consumers, we are able to address a serious and growing problem for our clients."

Promotes awareness during Tax Identity Theft Awareness Week and year round

At the start of tax season last week and [Tax Identity Theft Awareness Week](#) Jan. 26-30, tax identity theft is forefront in the news. However, taxpayers and their information are vulnerable year round. The Tax Identity ShieldSM will provide taxpayers a pre-tax-season scan to provide awareness of their potential risk of tax identity theft for the upcoming season. Clients also will receive customized tools and year-round information and education on how to reduce that risk.

"With the number of tax identity theft victims doubling in the last few years, individuals need to be highly vigilant going into tax season," says Trey Loughran, President of Equifax Personal Solutions. "The good news is Tax Identity Shield provides an added layer of monitoring and security to help safeguard your tax information."

Minimize risk and mitigate fallout with the Tax Identity ShieldSM

For those who qualify based on IRS requirements, Tax Identity Shield will provide tools and information to help clients better protect themselves from tax identity theft. Establishing an IRS Identity Protection PIN will make it more difficult for thieves to file a fraudulent return using that individual's tax identity. To mitigate fallout from a theft, the Tax Identity Shield will provide early detection of any fraudulent returns submitted through H&R Block and expert guidance and support from H&R Block restoration specialists.

Victims could face delays, other problems

Victims of tax identity theft can sometimes face several months or even years resolving the theft, resulting in significant delays in receiving their tax refund or filing their return. They may also face substantial paperwork and long interactions with government and legal authorities. Taxpayers may be responsible for proving that the return and income documents are fraudulent. Further, the taxpayer's information may be at risk for other forms of identity theft.

"Tax Identity Shield is the first of its kind on the market. It is an innovative, affordable and effective solution to tax identity theft," Ciaramitaro said.

H&R Block clients can enroll in Tax Identity ShieldSM online or with their H&R Block tax pro

To enroll in Tax Identity Shield, H&R Block clients should speak to their tax professional or sign up [online](#). The product is just \$29.95 if purchased separately online or \$20 if purchased with H&R Block's industry-leading Peace of Mind[®], a warranty-like product that helps clients who are concerned about the potential of an IRS audit. To find the nearest H&R Block office, visit www.hrblock.com or call 800-HRBLOCK.

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 in approximately 12,000 company-owned and franchise retail tax offices worldwide by professional tax preparers, and through H&R Block Tax Software products. H&R Block Bank provides affordable financial services products. For more information, visit the H&R Block Newsroom at <http://newsroom.hrblock.com/>.

About Equifax

Equifax Personal Solutions empowers consumers with the confidence and control to be their financial best. Find out more about Equifax's innovative suite of credit monitoring and identity protection products at www.equifax.com. Learn about identity theft and how to help protect yourself and your family at IdentityProtection.com. Get smart information on everything from credit to retirement, all in one place at the Equifax Finance Blog, blog.equifax.com.

Equifax is a global leader in consumer, commercial and workforce information solutions that provide businesses of all sizes and consumers with insight and information they can trust. Equifax organizes and assimilates data on more than 600 million consumers and 81 million businesses worldwide. The company's significant investments in differentiated data, its expertise in advanced analytics to explore and develop new multi-source data solutions, and its leading-edge proprietary technology enable it to create and deliver unparalleled customized insights that enrich both the performance of businesses and the lives of consumers.

Headquartered in Atlanta, Equifax operates or has investments in 19 countries and is a member of Standard & Poor's (S&P) 500[®] Index. Its common stock is traded on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) under the symbol EFX. In 2013, Equifax was named a Bloomberg BusinessWeek Top 50 company, was #3 in Fortune's Most Admired list in its category, and was named to InfoWeek 500 as well as the FinTech 100. For more information, please visit www.equifax.com.

For Further Information

Gene King

816-854-4287

[Email contact](#)

Source: H & R Block