

IMPORTANT ITEMS FOR PREPARATION OF 2024 TAX RETURNS

Please review these potential areas of concern for your 2024 tax returns:

General Items:

- GENERAL – All clients are required to treat our staff with the same respect that you provide Lisa. Failure to do so will result in immediate termination of our business relationship.
- ENGAGEMENT LETTER – this must be signed and returned to our office **PRIOR** to any preparation of your return. (See *2025 Important Yearly Updates* for details and penalties.)
- SHAREFILE (Secure Portal) –
 - Available Returns (Security Update) – only three (3) years of prior tax returns will be available to download. (See *2025 Firm Policies* for details.)
 - Two-Step Verification (Security Update) – due to user end security concerns (email), two-step verification is now required. (See *2025 Firm Policies* and *Individual Client Letter* for details.)
 - A link to our main secure File Box is available on our website (ihandercpa.com) should you be unable to sign in to upload documents to your ShareFile folder.
- IRS IP PIN – while encouraged to apply for an IP PIN, it is not required unless you had one in the previous year or applied for one during 2024. (See *2025 Important Yearly Updates* for details.)
- TAX RETURN PICK-UP – If possible, please pick up your return(s) within a week of notification of completion.
- IRS/STATE LETTERS – **All IRS and State written correspondence must be provided to our office no later than two weeks prior to the response deadline for reply as it can take up to two weeks to complete.** If provided after that date, our office cannot guarantee that the response will be completed in time and is not responsible for any penalties or interest resulting from the delay in response. Also, please note that if the office is closed, the two weeks required to complete will begin on the date the office reopens. Please plan accordingly as our office will be closed or on reduced hours for six weeks after tax season.

Business Items:

CORPORATE TRANSPARENCY ACT (CTA/BOI) – As of December 27, 2024, the temporary hold on the new Corporate Transparency Act (CTA or sometimes referred to as BOI) was reinstated and the registration is voluntary at this time. If you have not registered your business yet, it is your responsibility to watch the news for any further development on this legal issue.

MOST RECENT SCAMS AND HOW TO SPOT THEM

ANY CALLER OR LETTER REQUESTING PAYMENT BY GIFT CARD IS A SCAM.

Be aware of the following to spot email scams:

- Different address when hovering over email address;
- Non-IRS or -State email address (legit emails: @irs.gov and @dor.oregon.gov);
- Indication of a tax refund or money owed (a mailed letter will be sent by the proper tax authorities);
- A link to view documents/information or to verify any information;
- Directing you to a “phishing” website (*IRS.gov* is the official IRS website/ *Oregon.gov/DOR* is the official Oregon Department of Revenue website);
- Emails asking you to update your accounts; and
- Attachments.

Examples of the most recent scams:

- *“You still owe money on your return”* – common phone scam claiming that they are the IRS, or another department, claiming that you owe additional tax. If money is owed, the IRS will send a letter. In this case, please speak to our office prior to sending any money unless it is an expected bill.
- *“Get a large refund by creating your own W-2”* – this ranges from trying to steal your personal information to encouraging you to submit a false W-2.
- *“We calculated your tax refund, and you need to fill out this form”* – this is a very common scam and may also contain malicious links or attachments.
- *“Let us help you sign up for an IRS account”* – common scam to get your personal and log in information.
- *“Let us help you file a casualty loss claim”* – common scam for victims of natural disasters.
- *“We’re calling from the FDIC, and we need your bank information”* – the FDIC does not send unsolicited correspondence, ask for sensitive information, threaten, or demand money. Call the FDIC at 1-877-275-3342 if you receive correspondence from someone claiming to be from the FDIC.
- *“Your identity was stolen, and you need gift cards to fix it”* – any call or email, whether for a tax scam or any other scam, requesting/requiring the purchase of gift cards (untraceable currency) is an automatic red flag. No reputable company will use gift cards as a form of payment.
- *“We’ll cancel your Social Security number”* or *“You will be arrested/deported”* - do not verify any information; hang up immediately. A social security number cannot be cancelled. Scammers will “spoof”/fake caller ID to show the Department of Justice or a Law Enforcement number to seem legit. Neither legitimate divisions will make a call like this, however, if you are worried, contact your local law enforcement non-emergency line (Deschutes County: 541-693-6911) or your embassy.
- *“This is the Bureau of Tax Enforcement; we’re putting a lien or levy on your assets”* - there is no Bureau of Tax Enforcement. Any other initial contact claiming this should be a red flag.
- *“Use this Form W-8BEN to give us personal data”* – while this is a legitimate form, scammers have modified it to ask for personal information and may ask that you fill it out as a “anti-money laundering regulation” or because you were “exempt from tax reporting and withholdings on income.”. If you were not in contact with the IRS or another financial institution at the time, do not open the attachments or click the links, and directly call the company in question, or, if claiming to be from the IRS, forward the email as is without opening to phishing@irs.gov.