



Rhode Island Department of Revenue

Division of Taxation

ADV 2020-38
SECURITY SUMMIT

ADVISORY FOR TAX PROFESSIONALS
AUGUST 18, 2020

Tax professionals must have written information security plan

Security Summit issues reminder to safeguard client data, especially amid pandemic

PROVIDENCE — The Rhode Island Division of Taxation, the Internal Revenue Service, and other partners in the Security Summit remind tax professionals that federal law requires them to have a written information security plan.



Amid continuing security threats during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the Security Summit also recommends that practitioners create an emergency response plan should they experience a data theft. Contacting the IRS is step one in the plan to quickly protect tax professionals and their clients.

“COVID-19 has changed the way many of us work, and more tax professionals are working from home. With these changes, there are new risks from cybercriminals,” said IRS Commissioner Chuck Rettig.

The Security Summit’s recent series of announcements has been designed to give tax professionals critical information to protect their clients and protect their businesses. “We all have a role in protecting taxpayer data, and the tax professional community is a critical part of that effort,” Rettig added.

“It’s more important than ever to take appropriate security precautions, protect remote work sites, use two-factor authentication, and plan ahead for all possibilities,” said Rhode Island Tax Administrator Neena Savage.

Federal law administered by the Federal Trade Commission requires all “professional tax preparers” to create and maintain a written information security plan that is appropriate to each firm’s size and complexity. In addition, the FTC-required information security plan must be appropriate to the nature and scope of the company’s activities and the sensitivity of the customer information it handles.

Tax professionals working from home must ensure that client data is protected just as it would in an office setting.

For more information on this subject, use this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xfzES>.

The Security Summit consists of the IRS, the Rhode Island Division of Taxation, other states’ tax agencies, and the tax community -- including tax preparation firms, software developers, tax professional organizations, and financial institutions. Partners in the Security Summit work together to combat identity theft and fight other scams to protect the nation’s taxpayers.