

## **How to Validate Your Identity for Your Tax Return**

The IRS is strengthening its e-signature validation process for 2017. Thus, keep a copy of your tax return.

This tax season, you are to use your 2015 adjusted gross income or your 2015 self-select PIN in order to validate your identity on your federal electronic tax return for 2016. The electronic filing PIN is no longer available as an option.

The above method of validating your identity will help to combat identity theft. If you can't find a copy of your 2015 tax return or have other questions, contact your 2015 tax return preparer.

The e-signature validation change mostly affects those taxpayers who have used tax software in the past but are changing software brands in 2017.

Here are a few important steps:

1. Find a copy of your 2015 tax return that was originally filed with the IRS.
2. On your 2015 tax return, your adjusted gross income (AGI) is on line 37 of the Form 1040; line 21 on the Form 1040-A or line 4 on the Form 1040-EZ.
3. Create a five-digit Self-Select PIN to serve as your electronic signature. It can be any five numbers except all zeros.
4. If married filing jointly, each taxpayer must create a self-select PIN.
5. Provide your date of birth when prompted.
6. Provide either your 2015 adjusted gross income or your 2015 self-select PIN as the "shared secret" between you and the IRS. Either number, along with your date of birth, will serve to help validate your identity and verify your e-signature.