



Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation

Division of Professional Regulation

BRUCE RAUNER
Governor

BRYAN A. SCHNEIDER
Acting Secretary

JAY STEWART
Director
Division of Professional Regulation

March 3, 2015

Tax Return Preparation Task Force Statement

The Tax Return Preparation Task Force, created pursuant to the Illinois Public Accounting Act, 225 ILCS 450/30.9, seeks to provide assistance to taxpayers with the following statement:

If you choose to use a paid tax preparer for your state and federal taxes, choose that preparer wisely. A paid tax preparer is responsible for the accuracy of the tax return and by law must sign the return and include their Internal Revenue Service (IRS) preparer tax identification number (PTIN). A PTIN officially registers that person as a tax preparer with the IRS.

However, when choosing a tax professional, consider the unique professional qualifications and certifications such as a licensed Certified Public Accountant (CPA), licensed attorney, an IRS enrolled agent, and an IRS unenrolled preparer. CPAs are licensed in Illinois and can be sanctioned by the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation and the IRS. Attorneys are licensed in Illinois and can be sanctioned by the Attorney Registration & Disciplinary Commission and the IRS. Enrolled agents and unenrolled preparers are also subject to the authority of the IRS. Only CPAs, attorneys and enrolled agents can represent taxpayers before the IRS.

Taxpayers should be wary of promotional offers of free tax preparation by cell phone companies, car dealerships and other commercial enterprises. The primary goal of these businesses is to sell a product or service as opposed to the quality and accuracy of the tax return and the expertise of the tax preparer.

Visit the IRS website www.irs.gov for additional tax preparer selection tips.