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A new email scam is targeting tax professionals, according to the Internal Revenue Service, state tax agencies and tax industry leaders, who urge tax professionals to be on alert.

The new phishing scheme is targeting accounting and tax preparation firms nationwide, with the cyber criminals trying to collect sensitive information that will allow fraudsters to prepare fraudulent tax returns.

These latest phishing emails come in typically two stages. The first email is the solicitation, which asks tax professionals questions such as “I need a preparer to file

my taxes.” If the tax professional responds, the cybercriminal sends a second email.

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the cybercriminals are collecting the preparer’s email address and password and possibly other information.

The IRS urges tax professionals and tax preparation firms to consider creating internal policies or obtain security experts’ recommendations on how to address unsolicited emails seeking their services.

One tip: Never respond to or click on a link in an unsolicited email or PDF attachment from an unknown sender. As the IRS, states and the tax industry make progress in the fight against identity theft, cybercriminals are becoming more sophisticated in their efforts to steal additional client information. Criminals need more data in their effort to impersonate clients and file fraudulent returns to claim refunds, and schemes like this can help in this effort.

Read more at [Protect Your Clients; Protect Yourself](#), the Security Summit initiative to increase awareness about the tax professional community.

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