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Tampa Bay-area agencies as a part of the Tampa Bay Identity Theft Alliance, which investigates allegations under federal bank and money laundering laws and exercise authority outside their current jurisdictions as local officers.

Isaac M. O'Bannon • Mar. 16, 2013

The [Internal Revenue Service](#) has deputized law enforcement officers from 10 Tampa Bay-area agencies as a part of the Tampa Bay Identity Theft Alliance, which investigates allegations under federal bank and money laundering laws and exercise authority outside their current jurisdictions as local officers.

The new Special IRS Criminal Investigators were sworn in at the Florida Department of Law Enforcement's Tampa Bay Regional Operations Center.

The Tampa Bay Identity Theft Alliance was formed in July 2012 to combat the high number of identity theft crimes in Tampa and surrounding areas. The goal of this specialized law enforcement team is to investigate ID theft crimes and pinpoint vulnerabilities in personal and business transactions.

Members of the Tampa Bay Identity Theft Alliance who were sworn in today include agents from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, officers from Tampa, Clearwater, Largo, Brooksville and St. Petersburg Police Departments and deputies from Hillsborough, Polk, Manatee and Hernando County Sheriffs Offices.

Other partners include the IRS, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Secret Service, Social Security Administration Office of Inspector General, United States Postal Inspection Service, Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General, Pasco County Sheriffs Office and Plant City Police Department. Outreach partners are Crime Stoppers of Tampa Bay, CBS Outdoor Advertisers, HART LINE, Direct Mailers and the Tampa Bay Chapter of the Association for Certified Fraud Examiners.

Five simple steps to protect your identity:

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What to do if you are a victim:

- Flag your credit reports. Contact the three major credit bureaus (Equifax, Experian and TransUnion).
- File a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission at 1-877-ID-THEFT (1-877-438-4338).
- File a report with the local police.
- If you received a notice from the IRS, call the number on that notice.
- Fill out the IRS Identity Theft Affidavit, Form 14039.
- Call IRS Identity Protection Specialized Unit 1-800-908-4490 if you think you are at risk due to a lost/stolen purse or wallet.

For additional tips on how to protect your identity, visit www.secureflorida.org or www.irs.gov/identitytheft or www.ftc.gov/idtheft.

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