



GMS Flash Alert

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United States - IRS Announces New Options for Identity Verification

On February 21, 2022, the United States Internal Revenue Service (IRS) announced that taxpayers will have a new option available to them to verify their identity when signing up for IRS online accounts without the use of any biometric data, including facial recognition.¹ While taxpayers still have the option to use ID.me, taxpayers are now also able to verify their identity during a live, virtual interview with an IRS agent.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Many taxpayers and tax professionals expressed security concerns about using the private third-party service ID.me for verification purposes when it was originally announced as the only option, especially because new users would be required to submit biometric data. The IRS online account can be used to access many valuable IRS services, such as the Child Tax Credit Update Portal, Get Transcript Online, Get an Identity Protection PIN (IP PIN), and Online Payments Agreement. Using ID.me for verification purposes with no other options would have potentially excluded taxpayers with security concerns who would have had to find alternative ways of accessing necessary services or documents.

Background

As many taxpayers may be aware, the IRS announced on November 17, 2021 that ID.me would be used exclusively to verify the taxpayer's identity to access their IRS online accounts.² New users would have been required to submit a "selfie" and a photo of an identity document. Shortly after the announcement, the IRS faced public backlash, including an open letter from Senator Ron Wyden that referenced several security issues that came to light about ID.me. Following the controversy, the IRS announced on February 7, 2022, that it will transition away from the third-party service and is looking into offering alternative options.³

Current and Future Tax Seasons

The options to verify one's identity via ID.me or live interviews are short-term solutions for the 2022 filing season. The IRS is looking into rolling out Login.gov as an authentication tool for IRS online accounts after the 2022 filing deadline. Login.gov is an official secure sign-in service operated by the United States, which can be used by individuals to access the services of any participating agencies.⁴ Currently, the IRS is working to meet the security standards and scale requirements for Login.gov to offer this option to taxpayers for the coming filing seasons.

FOOTNOTES:

1 IRS, "[IRS Statement — New features put in place for IRS Online Account registration; process strengthened to ensure privacy and security.](#)"

2 IRS, "[New identity verification process to access certain IRS online tools and services](#)" FS-2021-15, November 17, 2021.

3 IRS, "[IRS announces transition away from use of third-party verification involving facial recognition,](#)" IR-2022-27, February 7, 2022.

4 [Login.gov](#)

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