

MURPHY FINANCIAL SERVICES, INC.  
Summer 2024 Newsletter

I hope you are enjoying your summer. If you haven't taken care of your tax return filing, make sure you get your documents to us as soon as possible. The sooner you get them to me, the less you will pay for the preparation fee. The latest filing date is October 15, 2024.

Teachers will now be able to deduct \$300 worth of classroom expenses, up from \$250. Since I am sure all teachers spend more than that on classroom supplies, it is nice to finally get an increase in the deduction even though it doesn't help enough. Make sure you keep receipts for your expenses.

Just a reminder, if you work for a company that has an educational assistance program they can reimburse you for tuition, books, fees, etc. that you paid but they can also reimburse you for student loan obligations. For those of you finished with school but still paying student loan bills, that is a nice way to help pay those loans off sooner.

It seems to be a fact that there has been more and more identity theft and other data breaches recently. Anyone with AT&T accounts have been notified of this issue. Medical facilities have had issues with information breaches. It seems to be one after another. The problem with these thefts and breaches: it makes it easier for people to file tax returns with someone else's social security number. In 2015 someone used my social security number and it took almost 2 years to get my 2015 and 2016 refunds. It was a big mess and very stressful. Because of that, I was issued an IP PIN from the IRS. Since then, I get an IP Pin sent to me by the IRS each year. The Identity Protection Pins are an extra level of security for the IRS. When I file my tax returns, I include the PIN number. If someone wanted to try to use my ssn again, they would also need the PIN number. The PIN number changes each year making it almost impossible for someone to file a fraudulent tax return. Now, because of all the issues going on, the IRS will issue an IP PIN to anyone, not just those that have had to deal with identity theft. I am suggesting that people get an IP Pin to help keep your accounts secure. Recently, I have had dependents of tax returns that had to deal with tax returns being filed with their social security numbers. Now, even the kids are getting IP PINs. It is an easy way to cut out issues with your social security number being used on a fraudulently filed tax return.

The IRS has also implemented a program for taxpayers to get an online account. With this account, you can have access to your own account. If you have any issues with payments, balance due, tax return issues, etc. you can look at your own account and see what the problems are. Since anyone trying to call the IRS knows that you can sit on hold for hours, get hung up on, deal with someone who doesn't have any information or answers, or many other issues, it is nice to be able to look at your account by yourself and see if you can find out the problem.

Getting an IP PIN and an ID.me account are not difficult and can be taken care of quickly. If it gives you another layer of security, it seems to me that it is time well spent.

3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter estimate payments are due 9/15!!