

TAX PREPARATION SERVICE

DATA SECURITY PLAN

December 20, 2024

History:

Tax Preparation Service is owned and operated by R. Brent Thackeray, as a sole proprietor, home based business. It is in a dedicated office space with a single access point. Tax preparation is accomplished via a single computer operated only by the owner/operator.

Safeguards:

- 1- Hard drive is non-removable, which contains the operating system (windows 11) and preparation program (Drake by Drake Software and is checked for updates, including security updates as flagged by Intuit).
- 2- Virus and threat protection is provided by Microsoft Windows Security. Updates are provided automatically.
- 3- Firewall and network protection is provided by Microsoft Windows. Updates are provided automatically.
- 4- Internet access and wireless access is provided through an Archer C4000 MU-MIMO Tri-Band WI-FI router, with 128k bit encryption. Modem is in the dedicated office space. Connection with the internet service, Xmission, is accomplished by fiber optics installed and maintained by Utopia.
- 5- Passwords are required to log into the computer and preparation software. In addition, the software requires a cell phone authentication code. Both the router and internet provider access are protected by password access, with that information secured in a fireproof safe located in my office.

Data Security:

- 1- Data is entered into the preparation software by owner/operator. Data is stored on a secondary 4TB external hard drive with access control.
- 2- Data is backed up on a second 4TB external drive, daily, stored off-line in a fireproof safe. With the exception of the daily backup, this external hard drive is stored only in the fireproof safe.
- 3- Data is also backed up weekly, on a 2TB external hard drive stored in a separate fireproof, locked box, stored in a file cabinet in a separate storage location.

- 4- As needed for some client meetings, a USB drive may be utilized for use on a laptop computer. This data is only used if meeting a client requires a remote meeting, usually in their home. This is rare only occurs if a client is housebound.

Client Information/data and Hard Copies:

- 1- Information, data, tax forms, etc. when provided may be delivered by and or electronically (PDF format only). This information is stored in tie-string envelopes, stored in a secure location within the dedicated office. Only the clients last name is on the envelope and no access is available to anyone other than the client or business owner/operator.
- 2- When draft of tax forms is completed, a PDF will be created the transmitted to the client via email. Personal information, names, social security numbers, etc. are redacted. Following a client review, if no changes or questions, are noted, and approval is received from the client, electronic submission to the IRS and applicable state agency is performed.
 - a. When acceptance for the Federal and state agencies is completed, the client will receive either a hard copy or electronic PDF, of the return for their records.
 - b. Any materials received from the client is either returned or shredded.
- 3- Final tax return forms are maintained by the owner/operator for a minimum of 3 years.

R. Brent Thackeray
Tax Preparation Service
Owner/Operator

Date 12/20/2024