



PRIVACY, INFORMATION PROTECTION  
AND DATA SECURITY

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY  
INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20224

DEC 11 2008

Charles V. Rossi  
P.O. Box 5220  
Hazlet, NJ 07730-5220

Dear Mr. Rossi:

I am writing in response to your inquiry dated September 5, 2008, regarding partial masking of the social security number (SSN) on taxpayer printed forms such as Form 1099-div, Form 1099-B, and the like. You expressed concern with the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS's) policy requiring the full display of the SSN on these type forms. Your concern is certainly legitimate given the realities of identity theft related criminal activity.

I am glad to hear that your organization has taken specific measures to protect personal information of your clients (shareholders). The IRS, as well, has implemented a number of improvements to safeguard SSNs and continues to strengthen and establish additional guidance and rules regarding the use, reduction and elimination of SSNs on electronic and paper documents.

Currently, my office is collaborating with IRS Chief Counsel and Department of the Treasury concerning a revenue procedure for partial masking of SSNs on Form 1099. Thank you for your recommendation. We will certainly consider and include this information as we continue discussions to identify and address SSN elimination and reduction opportunities.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (202) 622-5036 or Merlene Burnham, Acting Deputy Director, Privacy and UNAX at (202) 622-4003.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathleen Evey Walters".

Kathleen Evey Walters  
Acting Director, Office of Privacy  
and Information Protection