

Internal Revenue Service, Treasury

§ 301.7216-1

shall be fined not more than \$1,000, or imprisoned not more than 1 year, or both.

[T.D. 7127, 36 FR 11505, June 15, 1971, as amended by T.D. 8026, 50 FR 20758, May 20, 1985]

§ 301.7209-1 Unauthorized use or sale of stamps.

(a) Any person who buys, sells, offers for sale, uses, transfers, takes or gives in exchange, or pledges or gives in pledge, except as authorized in the Code or in regulations made pursuant thereto, any stamp, coupon, ticket, book, or other device prescribed by the Commissioner under the Code for the collection or payment of any tax imposed by the Code, shall, upon conviction thereof, be fined not more than \$1,000, or imprisoned not more than 6 months, or both.

(b) For use or resale of unused documentary stamps, see paragraph (c) of § 43.6802-1 of this chapter (Documentary Stamp Tax Regulations).

§ 301.7214-1 Offenses by officers and employees of the United States.

Any officer or employee of the United States acting in connection with any revenue law of the United States required to make a written report under the provisions of section 7214(a)(8) shall submit such report to the Commissioner, or to a regional commissioner or district director.

§ 301.7216-1 Penalty for disclosure or use of tax return information.

(a) *In general.* Section 7216(a) provides in effect that, except as provided in section 7216(b), any tax return preparer (as described in paragraph (b)(2) of this section) who on or after January 1, 1972, discloses or uses any tax return information (as described in paragraph (b)(3) of this section) other than for the specific purpose of preparing, assisting in preparing, or obtaining or providing services in connection with the preparation of, any tax return of the taxpayer by or for whom the information was made available to a tax return preparer, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not more than \$1,000, or imprisoned not more than 1 year, or both, together with the costs of pros-

ecution. Pursuant to section 7216(b), the provisions of section 7216(a) and this paragraph do not apply to any disclosure or use permitted under § 301.7216-2 or § 301.7216-3.

(b) *Definitions.* For purposes only of section 7216 and §§ 301.7216-1 through 301.7216-3—

(1) *Tax return.* The term “tax return” means any return (or amended return) of the income tax imposed by chapter 1 or 2 of the Code, or any declaration (or amended declaration) of estimated tax made under section 6015.

(2) *Tax return preparer.* (i) The term tax return preparer means any person—

(A) Who is engaged in the business of preparing tax returns,

(B) Who is engaged in the business of providing auxiliary services in connection with the preparation of tax returns,

(C) Who is remunerated for preparing, or assisting in preparing, a tax return for any other person, or

(D) Any individual who, as part of his duties or employment with any person described in (A), (B), or (C) of this subdivision, performs services which assist in the preparation of, or assist in providing auxiliary services in connection with the preparation of, a tax return.

For example, assume that a bank is a tax return preparer within the meaning of (A) of this subdivision and it employs one individual to solicit the necessary tax return information for the preparation of a tax return and another individual to prepare the return on the basis of the information that is furnished. Under these circumstances, both employees are tax return preparers. Also, for example, a secretary to a tax return preparer who types or otherwise works on returns prepared by the preparer is a tax return preparer.

(ii) A person is engaged in the business of preparing tax returns as described in subdivision (i)(A) of this subparagraph if, in the course of his business, he holds himself out to taxpayers as a person who prepares tax returns, whether or not tax return preparation is his sole business activity and whether or not he charges a fee for such services.

(iii) A person is engaged in the business of providing auxiliary services in

connection with the preparation of tax returns as described in subdivision (i)(B) of this subparagraph if, in the course of his business, he holds himself out to tax return preparers or to taxpayers as a person who performs such auxiliary services, whether or not providing such auxiliary services is his sole business activity and whether or not he charges a fee for such services. For example, a person part or all of whose business is to provide a computerized tax return processing service based on tax return information furnished by another person is a tax return preparer.

(iv) A tax return preparer described in subdivision (i)(C) of this subparagraph includes any person who—

(A) For remuneration but not in the course of a business prepares a tax return for another person, or

(B) For remuneration and on a casual basis helps a relative, friend, or other acquaintance to prepare the latter's tax return.

(v) A person is not a tax return preparer merely because he leases office space to a tax return preparer, furnishes credit to a taxpayer whose tax return is prepared by a tax return preparer, or otherwise performs some service which only incidentally relates to the preparation of tax returns. For example, assume that a tax return preparer contracts with a department store for the rental of space in the store, and that the store advertises that taxpayers who use the tax return preparation service may charge the cost of having their tax return prepared to their charge account with the department store. Under such circumstances, the department store is not a tax return preparer.

(3) *Tax return information.* The term "tax return information" means any information, including but not limited to a taxpayer's name, address, or identifying number, which is furnished in any form or manner by a taxpayer for, or in connection with, the preparation of a tax return of such taxpayer. Information furnished by a taxpayer includes information which is furnished on behalf of the taxpayer by any person; for example, any person required under section 6012 to make a return for such taxpayer, such as a guardian for a

minor, by a duly authorized agent for his principal, by a fiduciary for an estate or trust, or by a receiver, trustee in bankruptcy, or assignee for a corporation.

[T.D. 7310, 39 FR 11538, Mar. 29, 1974]

§ 301.7216-2 Disclosure or use without formal consent of taxpayer.

(a) *Disclosure pursuant to other provisions of Internal Revenue Code.* The provisions of section 7216(a) and § 301.7216-1 shall not apply to any disclosure of tax return information if such disclosure is made pursuant to any other provision of the Code or the regulations thereunder. Thus, for example, the provisions of such sections do not apply to a disclosure pursuant to section 7269 to an officer or employee of the Internal Revenue Service of information concerning the estate of a decedent or a disclosure pursuant to section 7602 to an officer or employee of the Internal Revenue Service of books, papers, records, or other data which may be relevant to the liability of any person for the income tax.

(b) *Disclosure or use of information in the case of related taxpayers.* (1) A tax return preparer may use, in preparing a tax return of a second taxpayer, and may disclose to such second taxpayer in the form in which it appears on such return, any tax return information which the preparer obtained from a first taxpayer if—

(i) The second taxpayer is related to the first taxpayer within the meaning of subparagraph (2) of this paragraph (a),

(ii) The first taxpayer's tax interest in such information is not adverse to the second taxpayer's tax interest in such information, and

(iii) The first taxpayer has not expressly prohibited such disclosure or use.

(2) For purposes of subparagraph (1)(i) of this paragraph (a), one taxpayer is related to another taxpayer if they have any one of the following relationships: husband and wife, child and parent, grandchild and grandparent, partner and partnership, trust or estate and beneficiary, trust or estate and fiduciary, corporation and