Congressional Update

News for members of Congress and their staffs – April 2022

April 18 tax filing deadline for most

For most taxpayers the filing deadline to submit 2021 tax returns or an extension to file and pay tax owed is Monday, April 18, 2022. By law Washington, D.C. holidays affect tax deadlines the same as federal holidays. In this case, due to Emancipation Day, the due date for D.C. taxpayers is April 18 instead of April 15. This due date is the same as the due date for taxpayers in all states with the exception of Maine and Massachusetts. Taxpayers in these states have until April 19, 2022, to file their returns due to the Patriots' Day holiday. Taxpayers requesting an extension will have until Monday, October 17, 2022, to file.

Deadline reminder: IRS has $1.5 billion in refunds for people who haven't filed a 2018 federal income tax return

Unclaimed income tax refunds totaling almost $1.5 billion may be waiting for an estimated 1.5 million taxpayers who did not file a 2018 Form 1040 federal income tax return, but people must act before the April tax deadline. In cases where a federal income tax return was not filed, the law provides most taxpayers with a three-year window of opportunity to claim a tax refund. For 2018 tax returns, the window closes April 18, 2022, for most taxpayers. This article is also available in Spanish and Simplified Chinese.

Filing taxes using IRS Free File is easy

Free tax prep, free e-filing and free direct deposit – it's all free with IRS Free File, which launched its 20th year in mid-January. Links on IRS.gov direct taxpayers to eight leading companies offering their brand-name products for free. All are available in English and two in Spanish. Active-duty military personnel have multiple choices regardless of other eligibly criteria.

Taxpayers earning $73,000 or less in 2021, are eligible to use the IRS Free File online tax preparation products on IRS.gov. Free File Fillable Forms, the electronic version of IRS paper forms, has no income limit and is best for taxpayers comfortable preparing their own tax return.

The IRS.gov/FreeFile page also contains the useful Online Lookup Tool. This tool lists tax preparation software providers, making it easier for taxpayers to find the right company for them.

Estimated Tax Payments

As taxpayers earn or receive income throughout the year, they should pay federal taxes either through withholding or estimated tax payments. If the amount of income tax withheld from a salary or pension isn't enough, or if there's income such as self-employment income, interest, dividends, or capital gains, taxpayers may have to make estimated tax payments.

To adjust withholding, the IRS offers a Tax Withholding Estimator Tool. A two-minute IRS YouTube video provides an overview of the Tax Withholding Estimator and an IRS online account isn't required to use this tool.

This two and half minute IRS YouTube video covers the basics of estimated tax payments. More information on who is required to make estimated tax payments, how to calculate the amount, when estimated tax payments are due and how to make them is available on IRS.gov.

The first quarterly estimated tax payment for the 2022 tax year is due by April 18, 2022. The next payments are due June 15, September 15, and January 18, 2023. If sufficient payments aren't made on time, penalties may apply.

Expanded Child and Dependent Care Credit can help families, others

Taxpayers who pay expenses for the care of a qualifying person while working or looking for work may qualify for an important credit. The Child and Dependent Care Credit includes tax year 2021. This means the credit is worth more and more taxpayers will qualify this year than ever before. Taxpayers with an adjusted gross income of more than $438,000 aren't eligible for this credit.

Tax Time Guide: IRA contributions for 2021 can be made until April 18

Taxpayers may be able to claim a deduction on a 2021 return for a contribution to an Individual Retirement Arrangement (IRA) made through April 18, 2022.

IRS unveils voice and chat bots to provide faster service and reduce wait times

IRS has begun using voice and chat bots on two of its specialized toll-free telephone assistance lines and IRS.gov. The bots help taxpayers with:

- Collection notice clarifications and questions
- Frequently asked questions
- Simple one-time payments

"Our phone lines continue to see unprecedented demand, and the IRS continues to look for ways to help people and avoid long wait times," said IRS Commissioner, Chuck Rettig. "Our telephone representatives remain an important part of the service we provide, but these bots can help some people avoid lengthy phone delays for something that could be resolved on the spot. This is part of a larger effort to help people get the assistance they need this tax season."
If needed, taxpayers can still speak with an IRS telephone representative.

IRS2Go is the official mobile app of the IRS

IRS2Go is available in both English and Spanish and lets taxpayers quickly address a number of tax subjects including:

- Checking refund status
- Making a payment
- Finding tax preparation assistance
- Signing up for helpful tax tips

IRS provides more forms, letters and publications in multilingual and alternative formats: Spanish Braille now available

In an effort to provide American taxpayers with the service they deserve, the Internal Revenue Service announced today the latest expansion of its multilingual products, Braille, text, audio and large print products are now available in Spanish.

Penalties and interest

It's not too late – taxpayers should file and pay taxes by **April 18, 2022**, to avoid extra charges. The video Avoiding Interest and Penalty Charges provides more info.

Reminder: Face-to-face IRS help available on Saturday, April 9 and May 14 at many IRS Taxpayer Assistance Centers

Many IRS Taxpayer Assistance Centers (TACs) will offer face-to-face help without an appointment from on Saturday, April 9 and May 14, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. You can find the TAC locations offering this service here. To receive TAC services during regular operating hours, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., people should call the IRS Appointment Line at 844-545-5640 to make appointments. To learn more about visiting a TAC, people should first visit IRS.gov/appointments to access a TAC locator tool, get tips for preparing for an appointment and links to several common online services.

IRS hiring more than 5,000 employees

The IRS is hiring more than 5,000 employees who will work in one of three processing centers located in Austin, Texas; Kansas City, Missouri or Ogden, Utah. These positions fall under a special hiring condition called direct-hire authority. Once hired, new employees may expect to begin work within 30-45 days. This is part of a larger hiring effort at the IRS.

A Closer Look: Timing is right to consider a career at the IRS

In the recent issue of "A Closer Look," Ken Corbin, Commissioner, Wage & Investment Division and Chief Taxpayer Experience Officer, discusses why this is the right time to consider a career with the IRS. This article is also available in Spanish.

TIGTA Report on Implementation of Advance Recovery Rebate Credit Payments (EIP3)

The Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) Report on Implementation of Advance Recovery Rebate Credit Payments Under the American Rescue Plan, including the IRS's written response, is available for viewing and download on the Treasury website.

Three New Technical Guides Published

Exempt Organizations and Government Entities has published three new comprehensive and issues-specific Technical Guides (TG). Available on IRS.gov, the TGs combine and update the Audit Technique

Guides (ATG) with other technical content and will replace corresponding ATGs once completed. The newest TGs are:

- TG 23 Religious and Apostolic Associations IRC 501(d), Publication 5627, Exempt Organizations Technical Guide (.pdf)
- TG 58 Excise Taxes on Self-Dealing under IRC 4941, Publication 5616, Exempt Organizations Technical Guide (.pdf)
- TG 62 Excise Taxes on Taxable Expenditures under IRC 4945, Publication 5590, Exempt Organizations Technical Guide (.pdf)

IRS Criminal Investigation Around the World

On March 14, IRS Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI) invited social media followers to join the agency on a virtual trip around the globe with a new social media campaign titled, "Around the World with IRS-CI." Each week since then, IRS-CI has highlighted one of its 11 attaché posts on Twitter and LinkedIn. With each segment, IRS-CI stakeholders will learn a little bit about what's happening at each location and be introduced to the agency's attachés who work with foreign governments to build partnerships, train law enforcement counterparts, and investigate financial crimes.

The first stop was Dubai, United Arab Emirates, where veteran IRS-CI special agent Dan McWilliams serves as the attaché. In his two and a half years of service there, McWilliams trained his Middle East law enforcement counterparts on how to recognize a variety of financial crimes, and helped investigate crimes ranging from trade-based money laundering to romance scams. Interested in learning more about IRS-CI's global presence? Follow along on Twitter @IRS_CI or via the IRS-CI LinkedIn page.

Below are links to recent cases

- BitConnect founder indicted in global $2.4 billion cryptocurrency scheme
- Nigerian citizen sentenced to over 13 years in prison for sweepstakes scheme
- West Des Moines man sentenced to 97 months prison for tax fraud and related crimes
- Five tax shelter promoters and two appraisers indicted in syndicated conservation easement tax scheme
- Two Florida tax preparers sentenced to prison: fraudulently claimed nearly 3 million dollars in refunds

The Volunteer Taxpayer Advocacy Panel announced vacancies in 33 locations

The Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (TAP), a Federal Advisory Committee, is seeking volunteers to serve on the panel beginning December 1, 2022. The TAP offers its members a unique opportunity to participate in the improvement of both the U.S. tax administration system and the organization of the IRS. These civic-minded volunteers listen to taxpayers, identify major concerns, and make recommendations to improve service.

Please help spread the word to those who may be interested in working with the IRS to improve its products and services. TAP is accepting applications through April 8, 2022, for vacancies in 33 locations. A one-minute video is available with more information about the TAP and how to contribute to this dynamic group of volunteers. To learn more about the TAP, please visit www.improveirs.org.

Taxpayer Advocate's Florida office moves from St. Petersburg to Clearwater

Local Taxpayer Advocate: Diane Himelstieb
Taxpayer Advocate Service
10200 49th Street North
Second Floor
Clearwater, FL 33762
Telephone: 727-369-2821
Fax: 727-369-2820

This move will have minimal effect on referrals coming from Florida members of Congress. Constituents who can't resolve tax problems on their own can reach Diane and her staff of experienced case advocates at the phone number listed above. TAS will treat taxpayers fairly and will ensure they know and understand their rights.

Coming Soon: 2023 Low Income Taxpayer Clinic Grant Application Period

The application period for a 2023 Low Income Taxpayer Clinic (LITC) grant is quickly approaching and will open on or around May 2, 2022. As stated in our previous article, the LITC program made progress and gained coverage in several states so far this year. However, we need your help to build on that progress and increase the number of eligible taxpayers who will have access to free or low-cost *representation* in an IRS controversy, *education* about taxpayer rights and responsibilities, and *advocacy* for issues that impact low-income taxpayers and taxpayers who speak English as a second language.

There are presently no LITCs in the states of **Montana** and **North Dakota**, and the territory of **Puerto Rico**. In addition, there are several states that need LITC representation in the following counties:

- **Arizona –** Apache, Coconino, and Navajo;
- **Florida –** Baker, Bradford, Brevard, Citrus, Clay, Columbia, Dixie, Duval, Flagler, Hamilton, Hernando, Lafayette, Lake, Madison, Nassau, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, St. John's, Sumter, Suwanee Taylor, and Volusia;
- **Idaho –** Ada, Adams, Bannock, Bear Lake, Bingham, Boise, Bonneville, Butte, Canyon, Caribou, Clark, Clearwater, Custer, Franklin, Freemont, Gem, Idaho, Jefferson, Latah, Lemhi, Lewis, Lincoln, Madison, Nez Perce, Oneida, Owyhee, Payette, Power, Teton, Valley, and Washington;
- **Nevada –** Carson City, Churchill, Douglas, Esmerelda, Eureka, Humboldt, Lander, Lyon, Mineral, Pershing, Storey, and White Pine; and
- **Pennsylvania –** Bradford, Clinton, Monroe, Northumberland, Pike, Snyder, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, Union, and Wyoming.

Qualifying organizations that can assist taxpayers in these areas are strongly encouraged to apply. LITC requirements can be found in Publication 3319, Grant Application Package and Guidelines. If you have questions or want additional information about the LITC Program, including the application process and details about the counties in states with partial coverage, please contact Karen Tober at Karen.Tober@irs.gov or by phone at 202-317-4095 (not a toll-free call).

IRS Tax Tips: Helpful taxpayer information on a variety of topics

- Taxpayers should check out IRS YouTube channels for helpful videos on a variety of tax topics
- IRS Low Income Tax Clinics can help taxpayers resolve federal tax issues
- Two tax credits that can help cover the cost of higher education

- Small business rent expenses may be tax deductible
- E-filing options make tax time easier on members of the military and their families
- Understanding taxpayer rights: The right to be informed

Additional information on IRS.gov

- Easy steps to avoid tax return errors that can delay processing or adjust refunds
- IRS Information Technology looking for over 200 technologists to focus on modernization; job openings posted with more to come
- Taxpayer Experience Office formally established to improve service across the IRS
- Extension of Time to File Your Tax Return Beyond the April Deadline
- Tax Time Guide: IRS reminds taxpayers to report gig economy income, virtual currency transactions, foreign source income and assets
- IRS: Expanded credits for families highlight tax changes for 2021; many people who don't normally file should file this year
- Recovery Rebate Credit
- Find a Location for Free Tax Prep: Find a location for free tax assistance.
- Where's My Refund?
- Publication 5486-A, Claiming the Recovery Rebate Credit When You Don't Normally File a Tax return
- Top 5 things to remember when filing income tax returns in 2022
- Families received their December advance Child Tax Credit payment; those not receiving payments may claim any missed payments on the upcoming 2021 tax return
- Tax scams and consumer alerts
- Get up-to-date status on affected IRS operations and services during COVID-19
- Tax relief in disaster situation
- Get ready for taxes

Help on IRS.gov

- Filing – Payments – Refunds – Credits and Deductions – Forms and Instructions –Tax Questions

IRS in other languages

- Basic tax information is available in 21 languages, including English.

IRS on social media

- YouTube – Twitter – Instagram – Facebook

IRS2Go is the official mobile app of the IRS, available in both English and Spanish.

The *IRS Congressional Update* is a monthly newsletter prepared by IRS Legislative Affairs. For information on resolving taxpayer account issues, visit the Taxpayer Advocate Service.