



## News Release

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### **Tax Preparers Must Renew Their PTINs and Those Required to Take the RTRP Test Should Schedule It As Soon As Possible**

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WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service today reminded professional tax return preparers to renew their Preparer Tax Identification Numbers (PTINs) if they plan to prepare returns in 2013. Current PTINs expire Dec. 31, 2012.

Anyone who prepares or helps prepare all or substantially all of a federal tax return, claim for refund or other federal forms for compensation must have a valid PTIN. All enrolled agents also must have a PTIN. Tax professionals can obtain or renew their PTINs at [www.irs.gov/ptin](http://www.irs.gov/ptin).

Preparers who need to take a competency test are encouraged to schedule an appointment while they are renewing their PTIN. The registered tax return preparer (RTRP) test can be scheduled up to six months in advance, depending on the location. Select “next steps and additional requirements” within your online PTIN account to schedule the RTRP test.

The other option available to those required to test is the Special Enrollment Exam which is a three-part test to become an enrolled agent (EA). Enrolled agent status is the highest credential the IRS awards. More information is available at [www.irs.gov/taxpros/agents](http://www.irs.gov/taxpros/agents).

The online PTIN system has been substantially upgraded. Those renewing their PTINs can complete the process in about 15 minutes. The renewal fee is \$63. Tools are available to assist any preparers who have forgotten their user name, password or email address.

New tax return preparers who are obtaining a first-time PTIN must create an online PTIN account as a first step and then follow directions to obtain a PTIN. Their fee is \$64.25.

All preparers are encouraged to ensure entry of accurate information so the IRS can properly determine test requirements. Enrolled agents, certified public accountants and attorneys should carefully enter information about their professional credentials. Preparers who do not prepare any Form 1040 series returns or who are supervised in

certain firms must self-certify that they are exempt from the testing requirement. A supervised preparer is one who is employed by a law or accounting firm at least 80 percent owned by attorneys, CPAs or EAs who is supervised by an attorney, CPA or EA who reviews and signs the returns they prepare.

RTRPs and RTRP candidates also must self-certify that they have completed or will complete the required 15 hours of continuing education courses.

The annual registration and renewal requirement is part of the IRS's ongoing effort to enhance the tax preparer profession and improve services to taxpayers.

Enrolled agents, certified public accountants and attorneys already have passed exams and maintain professional education requirements. Tax return preparers who are not enrolled agents, certified public accountants or attorneys must pass the RTRP test or the Special Enrollment Exam by Dec. 31, 2013.

The IRS recently created the new credential – registered tax return preparer. Individuals in this category must meet the RTRP testing and CE requirements. So far, there are more than 48,000 preparers who have earned RTRP certificates. There also has been an increase in the number of people taking the enrolled agent exam.

Starting Jan. 1, 2014, only registered tax return preparers, enrolled agents, CPAs and attorneys will be authorized to prepare and sign federal individual returns.

There are currently 739,000 tax preparers with 2012 PTINs. Approximately 350,000 of them are subject to the new testing and CE requirements.