

IRS REACHES OUT TO TAX AND BUSINESS COMMUNITIES WITH CREATION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND LIAISON DIVISION

WASHINGTON – Tax professionals, taxpayer assistance groups, business and trade associations and government groups that deal with the Internal Revenue Service will find an organization with new resources specifically dedicated to building partnerships.

Effective this week, the agency created a new Communications and Liaison Division designed to build and maintain effective working relationships with a broad range of private, public and governmental groups to accomplish mutual goals that help taxpayers. The move is part of the agency's reorganization.

"A pivotal part of the IRS reorganization will be building relationships with our many stakeholders and providing a better avenue for the exchange of ideas," said David R. Williams, Chief, Communications and Liaison. "The end result will be improved service for taxpayers."

The C&L Division actively seeks to work with external groups outside the IRS to offer education, provide services and meet the needs of the public. The Division consists of four offices – Communications, Legislative Affairs, National Public Liaison, and Governmental Liaison and Disclosure.

The National Public Liaison Office handles contacts with numerous stakeholders. In particular, National Public Liaison provides a conduit between the IRS and tax professionals and business and trade associations, through which information, ideas and issues flow.

"The open exchange of ideas and mutual efforts at problem-solving by taxpayers, tax practitioners and the IRS benefits everyone," said Len Podolin, President of the American Tax Policy Institute.

Among other successful ventures, the IRS has partnered with the American Bar Association's Section of Taxation to develop the IRS Web site for teenagers, *TAXinteractive*.

"The Section was delighted to be able to partner with the IRS in producing this innovative and critically important educational program," said Pamela F. Olson, Chair of the ABA Section of Taxation.

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The Governmental Liaison and Disclosure Office explores opportunities to partner with state tax and other authorities to streamline federal and state tax administration and reduce burden on the taxpayer. In the past, the IRS and various states have worked together on various initiatives aimed at improved tax administration, including one-stop federal and state tax assistance sites, joint small business workshops, and joint efforts to expand electronic filing of both state and federal returns.

In a first for the IRS, Governmental Liaison personnel will now be located in all 50 states to foster increased partnering with state and local governmental entities.

“The Governmental Liaison in each state will be able to focus exclusively on the unique needs of taxpayers and partners in those states,” said Harley T. Duncan, Executive Director of the Federation of Tax Administrators, an association of tax agencies in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and New York City. “We were especially pleased to see the extraordinary steps the IRS has taken to learn about the daily needs of their working partners and taxpayers in designing the new structure.”

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