

IRM PROCEDURAL UPDATE

DATE: 01/21/2016

NUMBER: WI-21-0116-0156

SUBJECT: Changed Form 1040X 12 Week Processing Time Frame to 16 Weeks

AFFECTED IRM(S)/SUBSECTION(S): 21.4.1.3

CHANGE(S):

IRM 21.4.1.3(2) - Deleted the note regarding temporary processing time frames and changed the amended return processing time frame from 12 weeks to 16 weeks.

1. When responding to a refund inquiry for a federal tax return you need to know the following information:

- o For prior tax year inquiries, authenticate the taxpayer's identity and conduct account research to assist the taxpayer. See IRM 21.4.1.3.1, *Locating the Taxpayer's Return*, for additional information if needed.

CAUTION: It is extremely important to carefully review the refund statute expiration date (RSED). Refer to IRM 25.6.1, *Statute of Limitations Processes and Procedures*, for additional information.

NOTE: Before ending the call, advise the taxpayer that the best way to get the most current information about their refund is through the automated systems. They are fast, accurate and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from any computer or smart phone with internet access, and the information provided is specific to each taxpayer who uses the tool. Also remind them that by using the automated systems, they would not have to wait on hold to speak to an assistor.

- o For current tax year inquiries, continue with the following questions/procedures:
 - Was the return filed electronically or on paper?
 - When was the return filed?

NOTE: If taxpayer is calling regarding their state refund, refer to State Income Tax Contact Information for the appropriate state agency number.

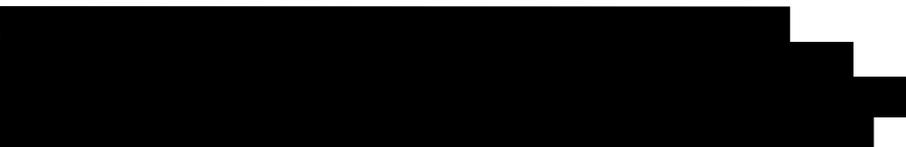
2. Use the following table to determine if the processing time frame has been met.

Return Type	Processing Time Frame
Paper refund return	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 6 weeks for normal processing ○ For returns claiming the Adoption Credit, if returns are selected for Exam, the time frame is approximately 14 weeks. If after 8 weeks research indicates the return was selected, inform the taxpayer that the return was selected for further review and that we will either contact them, or the refund/credit will be issued within the 14 week period. ○ For Injured Spouse returns see IRM 21.4.6.5.2, <i>Injured Spouse Inquiries</i>, for additional information.
e-file refund return	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3 weeks (from the date the taxpayer received acknowledgement that the return was accepted by IRS) ○ Refund research may begin on the 21st day
1040X return (see (7) below for amended return information through IRS automation)	up to 16 weeks

NOTE: If taxpayer filed a Form W-7, *Application for IRS Individual Taxpayer Identification Number*, with their return, see IRM 3.21.263.7.2, *Inquiries Regarding Status of Application*.

NOTE: Customer Account Data Engine (CADE) will have little impact on processing time frames. Use the above chart for all returns processed through CADE.

REMINDER: If the account has a transaction code (TC) 971, action code (AC) 052 posted, normal processing time will increase by two cycles as this action causes the return to re-sequence for two cycles. If the account has a TC 971, AC 152 posted, normal processing time will increase by one cycle as this action causes the return to re-sequence for one cycle. If the taxpayer asks why the processing time was increased tell them the return was randomly selected for additional review. Do not mention IVO (previously AMTAP), CI, etc.

NOTE: # 

[REDACTED] #

NOTE: Do not initiate a refund trace over the phone if there is IDT involvement on the module. When providing a pre-populated Form 3911, verify all information is for the correct taxpayer. See IRM 25.23.4.4.1, *Telephone/Paper Inquiries Regarding MXEN, MXSP, IDT(X), IDS(X), and Scrambled Cases*, for additional information.

3. **DO NOT** conduct any refund research prior to the end of these time frames, unless conditions in the table in (4) below exist.
4. Ask the taxpayer if they've checked on the status of the refund by using one of the IRS automated systems, Where's My Refund (WMR) on IRS.gov, our free mobile application IRS2Go (English and Spanish) for smart phones, or the Refund Hot Line.

NOTE: Keep in mind that the WMR application is limited to the past 2 years, which means returns processed in 2014 are limited to 2012 and 2013 tax years with only one year available at any time. And, 2012 will display only if the 2013 hasn't yet been processed. If the taxpayer enters the 2012 refund information, and the 2013 has been processed, the taxpayer will get the message that no information is available for the data that was entered.

Use the table below to determine your call resolution actions.

If taxpayer's response is	Then
<p>No, and the normal processing time frames have not been met.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide the taxpayer with appropriate return processing time frames and information about our automated refund applications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Where's My Refund? on IRS.gov, now includes a "refund status tracker bar" that will show you which processing status your return is in: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Return Received – no projected refund date is given b. Refund Approved – the refund date depending on direct deposit or paper check mailing is provided c. Refund Sent –

	<p>informs the taxpayer of the date the refund was transmitted to the financial institution, or the date a paper check was mailed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ IRS2Go (English and Spanish), our free mobile application for smart phones ▪ Refund Hotline - 1-800-829-1954 - toll free assistors provide only if the taxpayer does not have access to a computer or the internet. <p>2. Advise the taxpayer that the best way to get the most current information about their refund is through the automated systems. They are fast, accurate and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from any computer or smart phone with internet access, AND the information provided is specific to each taxpayer who uses the tool. Also remind them that by using the automated systems, they would not have to wait on hold to speak to an assistor.</p> <p>3. Route them out to the automated Refund Hot line, transfer extension #90278 (English) or #90279 (Spanish).</p> <p>4. If the taxpayer refuses to be routed to the automated refund hot line, ask the taxpayer if they have any additional questions. If not, then thank him/her for calling and end the call.</p>
<p>No, and the normal processing time frames have been met.</p>	<p>1. Authenticate the taxpayer's identity and conduct account research to assist the taxpayer. See IRM 21.4.1.3.1, <i>Locating the Taxpayer's Return</i>, for additional information.</p> <p>2. Before ending the call, advise the</p>

	<p>taxpayer that the best way to get the most current information about their refund is through the automated systems. They are fast, accurate and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from any computer or smart phone with internet access, AND the information provided is specific to each taxpayer who uses the tool. Also remind them that by using the automated systems, they would not have to wait on hold to speak to an assistor.</p>
<p>Yes, and the normal processing time frames haven't been met, and they received a response saying "We received your tax return and it is being processed", or "Your tax refund is scheduled to be sent to your bank on..."</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DO NOT Access their Account or complete any research. 2. Advise the taxpayer that you are unable to provide any additional information than the information already provided by the automated system and provide the appropriate return processing time frames. 3. Advise the taxpayer that the best way to get the most current information about their refund is through the automated systems. They are fast, accurate and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from any computer or smart phone with internet access, AND the information provided is specific to each taxpayer who uses the tool. Also remind them that by using the automated systems, they would not have to wait on hold to speak to an assistor. 4. Ask the taxpayer if they have any additional questions. If not, then thank them for calling and end the call.
<p>Yes, and the normal processing time frames haven't been met, and they originally received a response saying "We</p>	<p>Tell the taxpayer:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The initial message is still accurate, we received the return, and it is being processed. Provide the

<p>received your tax return and it is being processed”, or “Your tax refund is scheduled to be sent to your bank on...”, but now the automated system returns a message indicating “no data is available”</p>	<p>appropriate return processing time frames.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The tool is updated no more than once a day – usually overnight. 3. They should wait and check the tool again tomorrow.
<p>Yes, and the taxpayer provides a 4 digit reference number that they got on one of the automated systems</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Authenticate the taxpayer's identity and conduct account research to assist the taxpayer. See IRM 21.4.1.5, <i>Internet Refund Fact of Filing</i>, for further guidance, and Exhibit 21.4.1-4, <i>Internet Refund Fact of Filing Reference Numbers</i>, for a list of the most common reference codes.
<p>Yes, and the taxpayer was informed by the automated application that a change occurred to the refund amount for which the taxpayer needs additional information or the taxpayer was provided with a call back number and 3 digit extension</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Authenticate the taxpayer’s identity and conduct account research to assist the taxpayer. See IRM 21.4.1.4.1, <i>Refund Not Sent or Amount Differs</i>, for additional information.
<p>Yes, but the automated application “cannot provide any information” and it has been more than 24 hours since the taxpayer received acknowledgement of their e-filed return</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Authenticate the taxpayer's identity and confirm that they are using the correct account information from their tax return. Access CC FFINQ or CC REINF if necessary. DO NOT PROVIDE ANY REFUND INFORMATION. 2. Advise the taxpayer of the appropriate return processing time frames and that the best way to get the most current information about their refund is through our automated systems. They are fast, accurate and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from any computer or smart phone with internet access, AND the information provided is specific to each taxpayer who uses the tool. Also remind them that by using the automated systems,

	<p>they won't have to wait on hold to speak to an assistor.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Route them out to the automated Refund Hot line, transfer extension #90278 (English) or #90279 (Spanish). 4. If the taxpayer refuses to be routed to the automated refund hot line, ask the taxpayer if they have any additional questions. If not, then thank him/her for calling and end the call.
<p>Yes, and the normal processing time frames have been met</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Authenticate the taxpayer's identity and conduct account research to assist the taxpayer. See IRM 21.4.1.3.1, <i>Locating the Taxpayer's Return</i>, for additional information. 2. Before ending the call, if the refund hasn't been issued, emphasize to the taxpayer that the best way to get the most current information about their refund is through the automated systems. They are fast, accurate and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from any computer or smart phone with internet access, AND the information provided is specific to each taxpayer who uses the tool. Also remind them that by using the automated systems, they would not have to wait on hold to speak to an assistor.

REMINDER: Remember, Where's My Refund cannot provide any information on Form 1040X, *Amended U.S. Individual Income Tax Return*. See (7) below for Form 1040X information through automation.

5. If the taxpayer has other non-refund related issues, after authenticating the taxpayer's identity, conduct the necessary account research and provide assistance according to the applicable IRM procedures.
6. If IDRS research reveals any of the following conditions, see IRM 25.25.6.6, "Non-TPP" Telephone Assistors Response to Taxpayers, for guidance:
 - o Letter 4883C or letter 5071C showing on CC ENMOD
 - o The account has UPC 126 RC 0 (with or without the letter)

- TC 971 AC 121 on CC IMFOL or CC TXMOD (with or without the letter)
 - TC 971 AC 129 on CC IMFOL or CC TXMOD (with of without the letter)
 - TC 971 AC 121 and no return posted (unpostable has been identified as deleted (URC D))
 - TC 971 AC 111 (only those that had a previous TC 971 AC 121 or TC 971 AC 129 marker)
 - TC 971 AC 134 with a TPP indicator TC 971 AC 121 and the return is currently UPC 126 RC 0
 - Letter 4883C or letter 5071C, and the taxpayer received but lost the letter, moved, or never received the letter
 - Letter 4883C or letter 5071C, and the taxpayer is questioning the reason for the delay
7. If preliminary questions determine the call is about a Form 1040X, *Amended U.S. Individual Income Tax Return*, proceed with the following:
- Ask the taxpayer for the date they mailed their amended return.
 - Determine if the amended return was submitted more than 16 weeks before today's date.

If the time frame has not been met, ask the taxpayer if they've checked on the status of the amended return by using one of the IRS amended tax return automated systems, and then use the following procedures:

NOTE: The **Where's My Amended Return?** tool provides the status of Form 1040X, Amended Tax Return, for the current year and up to three prior years.

If the Taxpayer's response is	Then
No	1. Provide the taxpayer with the appropriate processing time frame and information about our automated Amended Return applications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Where's My Amended Return? (WMAR) on IRS.gov includes a "status tracker bar" that will show you which processing status your amended return is in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Amended Return Received – Taxpayer is provided the received date and told to wait 16 weeks for processing b. Adjusted – The adjustment posting date is provided with information to wait 3 weeks for the refund/notice c. Completed – The taxpayer

	<p>should have already received the refund and notice information, and the inquiry date is greater than 3 weeks from the adjustment date.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New Form 1040X toll free number- 1-866-464-2050 - provide only if the taxpayer does not have access to a computer or the internet. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Advise the taxpayer the best way to get the most current information about their Amended Return is through the automated systems. They are fast, accurate and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from any computer with internet access, AND the information provided is specific to each taxpayer who uses the tool. 3. Advise the taxpayer it could take up to 3 weeks from the date the amended return was filed for information to become available. Also remind them that by using the automated systems, they would not have to wait on hold to speak to an assistor. <p>NOTE: Transferring a caller directly to the Form 1040X number is not an option. Transfer the caller to the WMAR automated application by using the WMR CSR direct transfer numbers #90278 (English) or #90279 (Spanish) that have already been established. Inform the caller before you transfer, to select the "Amended Return" prompt to use the automated application.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. If the taxpayer declines to use the automated tool - DO NOT access their account or complete any research. 5. Ask the taxpayer if they have any additional questions. If not, then thank him/her for calling and end the call.
<p>Yes, and they received a response saying "We received your amended tax return on... and it is being processed", or "received on...and adjusted on..."</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DO NOT Access their Account or complete any research. 2. Advise the taxpayer of the appropriate processing time frame and that you are unable to provide any additional information other than the information already provided by the automated system.

	<p>3. Advise the taxpayer the best way to get the most current information about their amended return is through the automated systems. They are fast, accurate and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from any computer with internet access, AND the information provided is specific to each taxpayer who uses the tool. Also remind them that by using the automated systems, they would not have to wait on hold to speak to an assistor.</p> <p>4. Ask the taxpayer if they have any additional questions. If not, then thank them for calling and end the call.</p>
<p>Yes,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ and the taxpayer provides a 3 digit reference number they got on one of the automated systems, or ○ and the taxpayer was informed by the application a change occurred to the amended return or refund amount, or ○ and a notice or letter was received, for which they need additional information, or ○ and the taxpayer was informed by the application to contact us if the amended return was filed more than 3 weeks ago and we have no record of it 	<p>Authenticate the taxpayer's identity and conduct account research to assist the taxpayer.</p>

NOTE: If the time frame has been met:

- Authenticate the taxpayer's identity.
 - Access CC TXMOD to determine if we have received the Amended Return. Form 1040X should be on IDRS within 3 weeks from the date filed.
 - WMAR keys off the TC 971 AC 120 placed on the account by Submission Processing. Conduct the necessary account research and provide assistance according to the applicable IRM procedures. See IRM 21.5.3.3.1, *Locating Amended Returns (Form 1040X)*, for additional information.
 - WMAR does NOT provide the status of Form 843 Claims, Injured Spouse Claims, Carrybacks (applications and claims), Form 1040 series marked as an amended return, or amended returns with a foreign address.
 - WMAR cannot provide information on amended returns accepted directly by Compliance/Exam/TAC or other functions in which the input of TC 971 AC 120 by Submission Processing is bypassed.
 - WMAR cannot provide information on Amended returns received prior to July 2012.
 - **Again, emphasize the best way to get the most current information about their refund is through the automated systems listed. They are fast, accurate and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from any computer with internet access, AND the information provided is specific to each taxpayer who uses the tool. Also remind them that by using the automated systems, they would not have to wait on hold to speak to an assistor.**
8. If minimum normal processing time frames have elapsed determine the following:
- Which tax period?
 - Were any notices received?

Research CC IMFOLT to determine the current refund status. If no record continue researching IDRS. See IRM 21.4.1.3.1, *Locating the Taxpayer's Return*, for command code information.

9. When practical, telephone the taxpayer for any additional information you may need. If you cannot contact the taxpayer by telephone, use existing letters to reply to or request additional information from the taxpayer.

NOTE: When contacting taxpayers, refer to IRM 21.1.3, *Operational Guidelines Overview*, for the appropriate disclosure authorization procedures.

10. When responding to a paper refund request, if there is no record of a return after researching, see IRM 21.4.1.3.1, *Locating the Taxpayer's Return*. Contact the taxpayer to request additional information.

NOTE: Consider the possibility that the taxpayer has made an informal claim for a refund. An informal claim submitted by the RSED may be perfected after the RSED and the claim will be considered filed on the earlier date. See IRM 21.5.3, *General Claims Procedures*, and IRM 25.6.1.10.2.6.3, *Informal Claims*, for information and guidance. The Service may work an informal claim and thereby waive the need to comply with the formal requirements as they are based on Treasury regulations and not the IRS Code.

11. Address correction is acceptable over the telephone for release of an undeliverable refund freeze. See IRM 3.13.5.27, *Oral Statement/Telephone Contact Address Changes Requirements*, for guidance. Ensure you are talking to the taxpayer or their authorized representative and document the adjustment remark section following the procedures found in IRM 21.1.3.20.1, *Oral Statement Documentation Requirements*. If there is any reason to doubt the identity of the person calling, request the caller to submit the information in writing. See Section 5.04(3) of Rev. Proc. 2010-16, 2010-19 IRB 664 for information about how the IRS is orally informed of address changes.
12. To research refund inquiries concerning non-receipt of direct deposit, see IRM 21.4.1.4.7, *Direct Deposits - General Information*.
13. Effective on January 1, 2011, TC 971 AC 696 was established to indicate that Bureau of the Fiscal Service (BFS) (formerly Financial Management Service (FMS)) has acknowledged/confirmed receipt of an IRS refund record. This code has no impact on refunds, either paper check, direct deposit or split refunds. It does not indicate that a refund was offset or is being offset, nor does it prevent a refund from being offset by BFS to a non-tax debt.