

IRS News Release

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IRS Seeks Volunteers for Taxpayer Advocacy Panel

IR-2013-28, March 12, 2013

WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service seeks civic-minded volunteers to serve on the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (TAP), which is a federal advisory committee that listens to taxpayers, identifies key issues, and makes recommendations for improving IRS services.

The TAP provides a forum for taxpayers to raise concerns about IRS service and offer suggestions for improvement. The TAP reports annually to the Secretary of the Treasury, the IRS Commissioner and the National Taxpayer Advocate. The Office of the Taxpayer Advocate is an independent organization within the IRS and provides oversight of the TAP.

“In trying to comply with an increasingly complex tax system, taxpayers may find they need different services than the IRS is currently providing,” said Nina E. Olson, National Taxpayer Advocate. “The TAP is vital because it provides the IRS with the taxpayers’ perspective as well as recommendations for improvement. This helps the IRS deliver the best possible service to assist taxpayers in meeting their tax obligations.”

The TAP includes members from all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Each member is appointed to represent the interests of taxpayers in their geographic location as well as taxpayers as a whole.

New to the TAP

For the first time, the TAP this year is seeking to include at least one additional member to represent international taxpayers. For these purposes, “international taxpayers” are broadly defined to include U.S. citizens working, living, or doing business abroad or in a U.S. territory. The new international member will not be required to attend any face-to-face meetings and cannot be reimbursed for such expenditures if he or she chooses to attend.

To be a member of the TAP you must be a U.S. citizen, be current with your federal tax obligations, be able to commit 200 to 300 hours during the year, and pass an FBI criminal background check. New TAP members will serve a three-year term starting in December 2013. Applicants chosen as alternate members will be considered to fill any vacancies that open in their areas during the next three years.

The TAP is seeking members in the following locations: California, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Texas, Washington, Puerto Rico and any other U.S. territory or location abroad. The panel needs alternates for the District of Columbia, Kansas, Kentucky, New Hampshire, New Jersey, South Carolina and Tennessee.

Applications for the TAP will be accepted through April 1, 2013. Applications are available online at www.improveirs.org. For additional information about the TAP or the application process, please call 1-888-912-1227 (a toll-free call) and select prompt number five. Callers who are *outside* of the U.S. and U.S. territories should call 954-423-7973 (not a toll-free call). You may also contact the TAP staff at taxpayeradvocacypanel@irs.gov for assistance.