

# IRS News Release

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## Tax Time Guide: Free Tax Return Preparation Available to Qualifying Taxpayers Across the Country

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WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service today reminded taxpayers who have yet to file their tax return that they may qualify to receive free tax help from IRS-trained volunteers through the [Volunteer Income Tax Assistance or the Tax Counseling for the Elderly programs](#).

This is the fourth in a series of 10 daily IRS tips called the Tax Time Guide. These tips are designed to help taxpayers navigate common tax issues as the April 15 deadline approaches.

The IRS partners with a network of community organizations to offer free tax services at thousands of tax preparation sites around the country. These sites are generally located at community and neighborhood centers, libraries, schools, shopping malls and other convenient locations.

The **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program (VITA)** offers free tax help and return preparation to people who generally make \$53,000 or less, people with disabilities, the elderly and limited English-speaking taxpayers.

In addition to VITA, the **Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) program** offers free tax help and return preparation for all taxpayers, particularly those who are 60 years of age and older, specializing in questions about pensions and retirement-related issues unique to seniors. The IRS-certified volunteers who provide tax counseling are often retired individuals associated with non-profit organizations that receive grants from the IRS.

### At VITA and TCE tax preparation sites, individuals can receive:

**Free e-file** - VITA and TCE provide free electronic filing. E-filing is the safest, most accurate way to file a tax return. Combining e-file with direct deposit is the fastest way to get a refund.

**Tax Benefits** - Using VITA and TCE can help get all the tax benefits for which a taxpayer is eligible. For example, taxpayers may qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit or the Credit for the Elderly. Taxpayers can also get help with the new Health Care Law tax provisions.

**Bilingual Help** - Some VITA and TCE sites provide bilingual help for people who speak limited English.

**Help for Military** - VITA offers free tax assistance to members of the military and their families. Volunteers help with many military tax issues. These may include the special rules and tax benefits that apply to those serving in combat zones.

**Self-Preparation Option** - At some VITA sites, individuals can prepare their own federal and state tax returns using free web-based software. This is an option if a taxpayer doesn't have a home computer or need much help. Volunteers are on site to guide. In most cases, this option offers free tax return preparation software and e-filing to people who earn \$60,000 or less.

**Find a VITA or TCE tax preparation site** - Visit IRS.gov, search the word "VITA" and click on "Free Tax Return Preparation for You by Volunteers." Taxpayers can also download IRS's mobile app — [IRS2Go](#), go to "Free Tax Help," enter the sought ZIP code and select a mileage range. Site information is also available by calling the IRS at 800-906-9887. To locate the nearest AARP Tax-Aide site, or call 888-227-7669.

Millions of people have received free tax preparation for more than 40 years through these two programs that are most recognized by their initials, VITA and TCE.

Other tips in the Tax Time Guide series are available on IRS.gov.