

IRS News Release

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2 out of 3 Taxpayers Have Already Filed; Use Free File or Direct Pay to Get a 6-Month Tax-Filing Extension; E-Pay and Payment Agreement Options Available on IRS.gov

IRS YouTube Videos:

Need More Time to File Your Tax Return? [English](#) | [Spanish](#) | [ASL](#)

IRS Tax Payment Options [English](#) | [Spanish](#) | [ASL](#)

Podcasts:

IRS Tax Payment Options [English](#) | [Spanish](#)

IR-2015-68, April 9, 2015

WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service today reminded taxpayers that quick and easy solutions are available if they can't file their returns or pay their taxes on time, and they can even ask for an extension, make a payment or request payment options online at IRS.gov.

Most taxpayers have already filed their 2014 returns. Figures released today show that as of April 3, the IRS had already received just over 99 million returns and issued more than 77 million refunds averaging over \$2,800.

For those who have yet to file, the IRS says don't panic. Tax-filing extensions are available to taxpayers who need more time to finish their returns. Remember, this is an extension of time to file; not an extension of time to pay. However, taxpayers who are having trouble paying what they owe may qualify for payment plans and other relief.

Either way, taxpayers will avoid stiff penalties if they file either a regular income tax return or a request for a tax-filing extension by this year's April 15 deadline. While taxpayers should pay as much as they can to minimize any penalties and interest, they should always file even if they can't pay the full amount due. Here are further details on the options available.

More Time to File

People who haven't finished filling out their return can get an automatic six-month extension. The fastest and easiest way to get the extra time is through the [Free File](#) link on IRS.gov. In a matter of minutes, anyone, regardless of income, can use this free service to electronically request an automatic tax-filing extension on [Form 4868](#).

Filing this form gives taxpayers until Oct. 15 to file a return. To get the extension, taxpayers must estimate their tax liability on this form and should also pay any amount due.

By properly filing this form, a taxpayer will avoid the late-filing penalty, normally five percent per month based on the unpaid balance that applies to returns filed after the deadline. In addition, any payment made with an extension request will reduce or eliminate interest and late-payment penalties that apply to payments made after April 15. The [interest rate](#) is currently three percent per year, compounded daily, and the late-payment penalty is normally 0.5 percent per month.

Besides Free File, taxpayers can choose to request an extension through a paid tax preparer, using tax-preparation software or by filing a paper Form 4868, available on IRS.gov. Of the nearly 13 million extension forms received by the IRS last year, almost 8 million were filed electronically.

Those who owe taxes and need a tax-filing extension can get a two-for-one deal. Use IRS Direct Pay or one of the other electronic payment options to pay by April 15 the estimated amount of tax owed, designate the payment as an extension payment, and the IRS will count that as a validly-requested extension – no need to separately file a Form 4868.

Some taxpayers get more time to file without having to ask for it. These include:

- [Taxpayers abroad](#). U.S. citizens and resident aliens who live and work abroad, as well as members of the military on duty outside the U.S., have until June 15 to file. Tax payments are still due April 15.
- Members of the military and others serving in Afghanistan or other [combat zone](#) localities. Typically, taxpayers can wait until at least 180 days after they leave the combat zone to file returns and pay any taxes due. For details, see Extensions of Deadlines in [Publication 3](#), Armed Forces' Tax Guide.
- People affected by certain [recent natural disasters](#).

Easy Ways to E-Pay

Taxpayers who owe taxes can now choose among several quick and easy e-pay options, including the newest and easiest, IRS [Direct Pay](#). Again, making a payment through one of these electronic options and designating it as an extension payment counts as filing for an extension. Available options include:

- Direct Pay. Available at IRS.gov/directpay, this free online tool allows individuals to securely pay their income tax directly from checking or savings accounts without any fees or pre-registration. No need to write a check, buy a stamp or find a mailbox. Payments can even be scheduled up to 30 days in advance, and the tool is available round the clock. Any taxpayer who uses the tool receives

instant confirmation that their payment was submitted. More than 3.5 million tax payments totaling more than \$7.2 billion have been received from individual taxpayers since Direct Pay debuted during last year's tax-filing season.

- [Electronic Federal Tax Payment System](#). This free service gives taxpayers a safe and convenient way to pay individual and business taxes online or by phone. Pre-registration is required. To enroll or for more information, visit [EFTPS.gov](#) or call 800-316-6541.
- [Electronic funds withdrawal](#). E-file and e-pay from a checking or savings account in a single step.
- [Credit or debit card](#). Both paper and electronic filers can pay their taxes online or by phone through any of several authorized credit and debit card processors. Though the IRS does not charge a fee for this service, the card processors do. For taxpayers who itemize their deductions, these convenience fees can be claimed on [Schedule A](#) Line 23.

Taxpayers who choose to pay by check or money order should make the payment out to the "United States Treasury." Write "2014 Form 1040," name, address, daytime phone number and Social Security number on the front of the check or money order. To help ensure that the payment is credited promptly, also enclose a [Form 1040-V](#) payment voucher.

More Time to Pay

Taxpayers who have finished their returns should file by the regular April 15 deadline, even if they can't pay the full amount due. In many cases, those struggling with unpaid taxes qualify for one of several relief programs, including the following:

- Most people can set up a payment agreement with the IRS online in a matter of minutes. Those who owe \$50,000 or less in combined tax, penalties and interest can use the [Online Payment Agreement](#) to set up a monthly payment agreement for up to 72 months. Taxpayers can choose this option even if they have not yet received a bill or notice from the IRS. With the Online Payment Agreement, no paperwork is required, there is no need to call, write or visit the IRS and qualified taxpayers can avoid the filing of a Notice of Federal Tax Lien if one was not previously filed. Alternatively, taxpayers can request a payment agreement by filing [Form 9465](#). This form can be downloaded from IRS.gov and mailed along with a tax return, bill or notice.
- Some struggling taxpayers may qualify for an [Offer in Compromise](#). This is an agreement with the IRS that settles the taxpayer's tax liabilities for less than the full amount owed. The IRS looks at the taxpayer's income and assets to make a determination regarding the taxpayer's ability to pay. To help determine eligibility, individuals can use the [Offer in Compromise Pre-Qualifier](#), a free online tool available on IRS.gov.

Details on all filing and payment options are on IRS.gov.

2014 FILING SEASON STATISTICS

Cumulative statistics comparing 4/04/14 and 4/03/15

Individual Income Tax Returns:	2014	2015	% change
Total Receipts	99,848,000	99,055,000	-0.8
Total Processed	98,170,000	96,992,000	-1.2
E-filing Receipts:			
TOTAL	90,306,000	90,608,000	0.3
Tax Professionals	54,295,000	52,963,000	-2.5
Self-prepared	36,011,000	37,645,000	4.5
Web Usage:			
Visits to IRS.gov	234,510,211	262,053,512	11.7
Total Refunds:			
Number	78,769,000	77,200,000	-2.0
Amount	\$219.936 Billion	\$217.351 Billion	-1.2
Average refund	\$2,792	\$2,815	0.8
Direct Deposit Refunds:			
Number	65,326,000	66,179,000	1.3
Amount	\$190.934 Billion	\$197.125 Billion	3.2
Average refund	\$2,923	\$2,979	1.9