

## IRS ACCEPTING GRANT APPLICATIONS FOR LOW-INCOME TAXPAYER CLINICS

WASHINGTON - Organizations providing low-cost legal assistance to people involved in tax disputes can apply for grants worth up to \$100,000 for the 2001 grant cycle, the Internal Revenue Service announced Friday. Grants are also available for programs that assist taxpayers for whom English is a second language.

“The IRS matching grant program encourages the creation and growth of low-income tax clinics across the nation,” said IRS Commissioner Charles O. Rossotti. “These clinics are an important resource for taxpayers who may have nowhere else to turn.”

The grant program, now in its third year, continues to expand. In fiscal year 1999, the IRS awarded nearly \$1.5 million in Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic grants to 34 groups across the nation. For fiscal year 2000, President Clinton and Congress approved up to \$6 million for qualified applicants. Of this amount, nearly \$4.9 million was awarded to 82 organizations.

Applications for Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic grants must be received by Sept. 25. Details about the grant program were published in Friday’s Federal Register, and copies of the application package (Publication 3319) are available on the IRS web site at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) under the “What’s Hot” section.

The grants will be awarded in December 2000 for the grant period commencing in January 2001.

Qualifying tax clinics may be run by either law, business or accounting schools -- whose students represent taxpayers in tax disputes with the IRS or in the courts -- or by tax-exempt organizations.

These groups can represent taxpayers in tax-related matters, refer taxpayers to qualified representatives and provide non-English speaking taxpayers information about their tax rights and responsibilities. Clinics may charge taxpayers a small fee for legal help.

The program allows the IRS to award organizations matching grants of up to \$100,000 a year to develop, expand or continue low-income taxpayer clinics.

(more)

The grant application process considers a variety of factors, including the clinic program's quality of service, the number of low-income taxpayers served and how many people in the clinic's service area use English as a second language.

The IRS has been helping low-income taxpayers for years through such programs as the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE). More information about those programs is available by calling the IRS's toll-free help line at 1-800-829-1040.

X X X