

LAST-MINUTE TELEPHONE ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

WASHINGTON -- The Internal Revenue Service's toll-free telephone help lines will be staffed around the clock on April 15 to help taxpayers who have questions or need assistance before the midnight filing deadline. The help lines will be available continuously from 7:00 a.m. on Tuesday, April 14, through midnight on Wednesday, April 15, local time. Taxpayers can call the IRS help line at 1-800-829-1040.

The IRS expects to receive over 600,000 calls to the help line on April 14 and 15.

"Extending our help line hours will make it easier for people to get last minute assistance," said Charles O. Rossotti, Commissioner of Internal Revenue. "The special hours are one of the ways in which we have recently improved service to taxpayers."

This year, the IRS provided Saturday customer service at over 150 offices nationwide during the last six weeks of the filing season. It also held special Problem Solving Days for taxpayers to meet face-to-face with IRS employees to resolve long-standing problems.

In addition, the IRS nearly doubled its telephone service hours, from 50 to 96 hours a week. This increased accessibility has resulted in 16 million fewer busy signals for callers. Starting on January 5, 1999, the IRS will offer 24-hour phone service throughout the year.

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