

# Employee Tax Compliance Messages

Filing Season 2017



The schedule below contains key tax compliance messages that can be incorporated into your employee communications throughout the year. The IRS encourages you to share this helpful information with your employees using appropriate vehicles such as newsletters, intranet, earnings and leave statements and closed circuit TV systems, where available.

## JANUARY

- » As federal employees, you agreed to abide by the Federal Standards of Ethical Conduct. These standards include complying with federal, state and local tax laws. You should file and pay federal, state and local income taxes accurately and on time by April 18, even if you are due a refund.\* You must report all of your taxable income to avoid an understatement of your tax liability.
- » It's your job to make sure that your tax return is filed accurately and timely, even if someone else prepares it. For example, if your spouse or a third party prepares your tax return and files it late, it does not excuse you from the fact that your return was late.
- » Find free options to prepare and file your return on IRS.gov or in your community, if you qualify. Go to IRS.gov and click on the [Filing tab](#) to see your options.
- » Did you or your spouse work an extra job during a furlough period, summertime or the holidays? If so, make sure you receive a W-2 from those employers and include the wages on your tax return.
- » You will need to report that everyone on your return had health insurance coverage all year, qualifies for an exemption from coverage or make a shared responsibility payment when you file your return. If you or anyone on your return enrolled in health insurance coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace in 2016, you will need to file a return to claim a Premium Tax Credit or reconcile any advanced payments of Premium Tax Credit paid directly to your insurance provider during the year.
- » If you, your spouse or anyone on your tax return enrolled in health insurance coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace in 2016, the Marketplace will send you Form 1095-A, Health Insurance Marketplace Statement by on or before January 31, 2017, for coverage in calendar year 2016. Form 1095-A provides necessary information you will use to claim a Premium Tax Credit or to reconcile any advance payments made directly to your insurance provider in 2016.
- » It is important that you file a complete and accurate tax return to avoid any processing delays. If your return includes errors or is incomplete, it may require further review that may delay your refund.
- » Make sure you have all your year-end statements before you file your return. This includes Forms W-2 from employers, Forms 1099 from banks and other payers, and Forms 1095 from the Health Insurance Marketplace, for those claiming the Premium Tax Credit.

## FEBRUARY

- » If you didn't receive all of your W-2s or 1099s by Feb. 15, contact your employers or financial institutions. You must report income from all sources, not just your federal job income. Make sure you receive W-2s from all employers, including all jobs you or your spouse had in 2016.
- » Start with IRS.gov to find information about filing options, check the status of a refund, make a payment or request a mailed transcript. Get answers to many of your questions right away by using the [Interactive Tax Assistant](#) (ITA).
- » Eight out of 10 taxpayers get their refunds by using IRS Direct Deposit. It's simple, safe and secure. When taxpayers combine direct deposit and [IRS e-file](#) to transmit their tax returns, the vast majority receive their refunds in less than 21 days.
- » The IRS issues more than 9 out of 10 refunds in less than 21 days. However, it's possible your tax return may require additional review and take longer to process.
- » Beginning in 2017, if you claim [Earned Income Tax Credit](#) or the [Additional Child Tax Credit](#) on your tax return, the IRS must hold your refund until at least Feb. 15. A new law requires the IRS to hold the entire refund — even the portion not associated

## February 2017(continued)

with EITC or the ACTC. The IRS will begin to release EITC and ACTC refunds beginning Feb. 15. However, the IRS expects the earliest of these refunds to be available in taxpayer bank accounts or debit cards during the week of Feb. 27, if there are no processing issues with the tax return and the taxpayer chose direct deposit. Read more about [refund timing](#) for early EITC and ACTC filers by visiting [IRS.gov](#).

- » You will receive one or more statements relating to health care coverage you had in 2016. Depending on your specific circumstances, the Health Insurance Marketplace, health coverage providers and certain employers may provide statements to you with coverage information for you, your spouse and any dependents. If you have a question or your Form 1095-A, Health Insurance Statement, was lost or never received, contact the issuer directly for a copy.

The information statements are:

- » Form 1095-A, Health Insurance Marketplace Statement
  - » Form 1095-B, Health Coverage
  - » Form 1095-C, Employer-Provided Health Insurance Offer and Coverage
- » File early. That way if you left any information out, there is time for the IRS to notify you of the problem and have you correct it before the due date. Filing early also gives you time to find a problem and file an amended return before the due date. Save your notice(s) for your records.

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## MARCH

- » Make sure you follow the rules to determine whether you can claim a dependent (see [Publication 501](#), Exemptions, Standard Deduction and Filing Information). If you don't understand a tax issue, conduct research and ask questions.
- » Carefully ensure your return is properly completed, signed, includes accurate Social Security numbers, and you attach all necessary schedules and documentation.
- » As a taxpayer, and as a federal employee, you must file your tax return accurately and timely by April 18, even if you are due a refund.\*
- » Consider whether you will need to file a request for an extension. Remember that an extension of time to file is not an extension of time to pay. You can get an automatic six-month extension of time to file by electronically submitting or mailing Form 4868, Application for Automatic Extension of Time to File U.S. Individual Income Tax Return, by the April 18 deadline.\* The fastest and easiest way to get an extension is through [IRS Free File](#).
- » You can request an automatic six-month extension of time to file when you make a tax liability payment with [IRS Direct Pay](#), the [Electronic Federal Tax Payment System](#) or by debit or credit card, and select Form 4868 as the payment type. Visit [IRS.gov/payments](#) for more information.

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## APRIL

- » Are you afraid to file a tax return because you owe money but can't pay? Here's what you need to do. File a tax return or an extension of time to file by the April 18 deadline.\* There is a big failure-to-file penalty, and all you have to do to avoid the filing penalty, is file. After filing, pay as much as you can, because your balance is subject to interest and a monthly late payment penalty.
  - » If you owe a balance, you can use [IRS Direct Pay](#) to pay your tax bills directly from your checking or savings account for free and receive instant confirmation that you made your payment. Other options are, paying online with a debit or credit card, by phone, or with your mobile device using the IRS2Go app. Lastly, you can pay electronically using the [Electronic Federal Tax Payment System](#). Once you've enrolled, you can pay various types of taxes year-round. Log on to [EFTPS.gov](#) or call 800-555-4477. Relief, such as a short-term extension to pay, an installment agreement or an offer in compromise may also be an option for you. Learn more at [IRS.gov/payments](#).
  - » Made a mistake? Forgot something? Correct your return by filing a Form 1040X, Amended U.S. Individual Income Tax Return. Do it as soon as you discover the mistake — do not wait for an IRS notice.
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## MAY

- » Did you owe tax this year? Consider increasing your withholding to ensure that you have sufficient tax withheld during 2017. You can use the [IRS Withholding Calculator](#) located at IRS.gov. To locate the calculator, enter the word “calculator” in the IRS.gov search box. Alternatively, see the Form W-4 worksheets in Publication 505, Tax Withholding and Estimated Tax.
- » If you have income not subject to withholding, consider increasing your IRS withholding on other wages you may earn to cover the additional tax this income will generate. Alternatively, consider making estimated tax payments. Use the Form 1040 ES worksheet to determine the amount of estimated tax payments necessary.
- » If you or anyone on your return enrolled in health insurance coverage from the Health Insurance Marketplace, report income and family size changes to the Marketplace when they happen throughout the year. Reporting changes will help make sure you get the proper type and amount of financial assistance, and will help you avoid getting too much or too little in advance. Receiving too much or too little in advance can affect your refund or balance due when you file your tax return.

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## DECEMBER 2017

- » Make sure your employers and financial institutions have your current address to ensure that you receive your W-2 and 1099 forms timely.
- » Consider the following life events that occurred in 2017 and how they may affect your tax situation:
  - Birth/Childhood Changes
  - Marriage/Divorce/Separation
  - Career or Job Changes/Unemployment/Furlough
  - TSP/401k Withdrawals
  - Disasters/Casualties
  - Moving/Home Ownership
  - Health Insurance Coverage
  - Foreclosure/Debt Forgiveness
  - Death
  - Bankruptcy

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## PRE-RETIREMENT and RETIREMENT

- » When you retire, your tax responsibilities don't go away, but they will change. The IRS has a number of publications to help you navigate through the change, including Publication 4190, Tax Guide for the Retiree. Visit [IRS.gov](#) to view, order or download and print this valuable tax brochure.
- » Our tax law provides for a pay-as-you-go system, which requires taxes to be paid on income as it is received. To ensure you do not have too much or too little income tax withheld, use the [IRS Withholding Calculator](#) on IRS.gov. To locate the calculator, enter the word “calculator” in the IRS.gov search box. Alternatively, see the Form W-4 worksheets in Publication 505, Tax Withholding and Estimated Tax.

\*Because April 15 falls on a Saturday, and Monday, April 17 is the Washington D.C. Emancipation Day holiday, the deadline to file and pay taxes due is Tuesday, April 18.