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Still Need to File a 2021 Tax Return?



Don't wait until the Oct. 17 extension deadline. If you're ready, file today.

This year, it's especially important to file your 2021 tax return electronically and ensure your return is complete and accurate. Don't mail a paper return if you don't have to. Instead, file electronically any time before the October deadline, even if you requested a filing extension.

Why?

The IRS is continuing to process a high volume of returns. Millions more 2021 tax returns are expected to be filed around the Oct. 17 extension deadline.

IRS tips for filing after the April due date:

- › **File electronically as soon as you're ready.** Filing electronically is fast, secure, convenient, and the best way to avoid errors. Using e-file helps the IRS process returns, apply tax payments and issue refunds faster. The IRS processes most e-filed returns and issues direct deposit refunds in less than three weeks. You can use e-file to file your 2021 tax return from now until October 17, 2022.
- › **Requested an extension?** While you have until Oct. 17, you can file as soon as you're ready.
- › **Didn't request an extension and owe tax?** File as soon as possible to avoid further penalties and interest. You can set up a payment plan or make full or partial payments.
- › **Need to file a tax return to claim a refund?** If you're not required to file, you may still be eligible for a refund if your employer withheld more taxes from your pay than you owe. But you'll need to file a return to claim it.
- › **Some tax credits may mean a refund.** Even if you owe no tax, refundable credits may allow you to get a refund even if you normally don't file. The most common are the **Earned Income Tax Credit, Child and Dependent Care Credit** and **Child Tax Credit**.
- › **Take advantage of IRS Free File.** 70% of taxpayers have the choice of brand-name tax preparation software to use at no cost.
- › **Use Free File Fillable Forms.** This option is like completing a paper return. It doesn't ask about or explain tax situations and performs only basic calculations. You can e-file for free and don't need to mail a paper return.

Remember: To speed refunds and avoid delays in processing, don't wait until October 17 if you have the information to electronically file an accurate return now.

Get help filing

- › Review IRS tips on choosing a reputable tax preparer if you need tax preparation help. The **Choosing a Tax Professional** page on **IRS.gov** has information about preparer credentials and qualifications.
- › The IRS's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) programs offer free basic tax return preparation to qualified individuals. Use the **VITA/TCE Locator Tool** on **IRS.gov** to locate available sites.