



Earned Income Tax Credit

What is the Earned Income Tax Credit?

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a special federal tax benefit for working people who earn low or moderate incomes.

What is a tax credit?

A tax credit reduces the amount of tax that you owe and can result in more money for you. Due to the EITC, you might be eligible for a refund of up to \$4,140 depending on your earnings.

EITC eligibility

To be eligible you must meet certain guidelines, such as:

- Income level
- Child custody or age
- Filing status
- Residency (U.S. Citizen or Resident Alien)

Eligibility information

The Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Publication 596 provides you with complete eligibility requirements. You can obtain a copy of Publication 596 by using the following link: www.irs.gov or by calling the IRS at (800) 829-1040. Also, you can contact your local IRS office for assistance.

Tax preparation assistance that will cost you money

Commercial tax preparers charge you money to help file your taxes. Generally, commercial tax preparers offer these services: filling out tax returns (approximately \$25-\$50), electronic filing (approximately \$25), and quick-turn around refunds, which are called “refund anticipation loans,” (approximately \$50 to \$200).

Free tax preparation assistance

You don't need to pay someone for tax preparation assistance when that service is available free of charge. You can obtain free tax-filing assistance from qualified VITA volunteers, AARP Tax-Aide (not just for seniors), or from your local IRS office.

VITA and Tax-Aide sites

VITA stands for Volunteer Income Tax Assistance. VITA is a free IRS sponsored program to help low and moderate income workers prepare

and electronically file their tax forms. Trained volunteers are available in communities across the country from January through April 15 to help people prepare and file taxes.

To find a VITA or Tax-Aide site in your community, contact your local IRS office or call the IRS toll-free number, (800) 829-1040.