



INFORMATION ON IRS PROGRAMS FOR MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS AND THEIR STAFFS

IRS Congressional Update

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More Sources:

World Wide Web

IRS.gov
[Taxpayer Advocate Service](#)

YouTube

[IRSvideos](#)
[IRSvideos in ASL](#)
[IRSvideos Multilingual](#)
[Taxpayer Advocate Service](#)

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[IRS News](#)
[Tax Professionals](#)
[IRS en Espanol](#)
[Taxpayer Advocate](#)

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[Internal Revenue Service](#)

Disability information for individuals, businesses and IRS partners

The IRS and our partners are focusing our efforts to provide financial education and tax preparation assistance to individuals with disabilities. Businesses that accommodate individuals with disabilities should be aware of tax credits for which they may be eligible.

Assistance for individuals with disabilities

If you are a disabled veteran, please visit our [Veterans with Disabilities](#) page. Taxpayers unable to complete their tax returns because of a disability may consider free tax assistance sponsored by one of our partners in their community. Check the [Volunteer Income Tax Assistance or Tax Counseling for the Elderly programs](#) to learn more.

Download accessible tax products

The IRS provides some tax products in a variety of accessible file formats including Accessible PDF, Braille and Text, and Large Print. Many of our publications are available as eBooks in the ePub format. Visit the [Accessible IRS Tax Products](#) page to review the available material.

Partnering to assist persons with disabilities

If your organization works with or serves people with disabilities who also have low to moderate incomes, you may be a [good candidate to partner with IRS](#) for tax assistance in your community. Every year thousands of organizations join IRS to assist people who need tax help. Working together, we deliver financial education and other free tax services to the public.

Tax benefits for businesses with employees with disabilities

Did you know that businesses may qualify for tax credits and deductions when incurring expenses to accommodate individuals with disabilities? Learn what your business can do to reach out to this population and the tax benefits you may receive in return.

More Information for People with Disabilities

- [U.S. Department of Labor](#), Office of Disability Employment Policy
- [Social Security Administration](#), Benefits For People with Disabilities
- [U.S. Department of Education](#), The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services

WHAT'S NEW IN TAXES...

[Taxes, Security, Together](#)
[Protect your Info](#)

[Selecting a preparer](#)
[Change of address?](#)

[Estate Tax Data](#)
[Data for Tax Researchers](#)



Five tax topics for new businesses

Constituents starting a new business face many financial challenges including federal taxes. Before [starting a business](#), they can get the tax basics at the [IRS Small Business and Self-Employed Tax Center](#). A key to success in starting a business is to know your income and employment tax obligations. Here are five tax considerations that can help your constituents' businesses get off to a good start.

1. Business Structure — [Business structure](#) is one of the first decisions to be made. This choice will determine which tax forms are filed. In recent years, many small business owners have formed or converted to a Limited Liability Company. This is a business structure allowed by state statute. For federal income tax purposes, the IRS recognizes the following types of businesses: sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation and S Corporation.

2. Business Taxes — There are four [general types of business taxes](#): income tax, self-employment tax, employment tax and excise tax. In most cases, business structure determines the types of tax a business pays. Income tax is applicable to sole proprietors and corporations. Sole proprietors also pay self-employment tax to contribute to social security and Medicare. Employers pay employment and unemployment taxes on wages, and withhold tax from their employees' wages. Excise taxes apply to the sale or manufacture of certain goods and activities. Businesses pay their tax liabilities by making [estimated tax](#) payments or deposits. [IRS Direct Pay](#) is used by many businesses to pay. It is the fast, free, and secure way to pay from a checking or savings account.

3. Employer Identification Number — Many new businesses will need an Employer Identification Number. Constituents can check if they need one on our [Employer ID Number](#) page. New business owners can [apply for an EIN online](#).

4. Accounting Method — An [accounting method](#) is a set of rules used to determine when and how to report income and expenses. Constituents must use a consistent method. The two most common are the cash and accrual methods. Under the cash method, you normally report income and deduct expenses in the year received or paid. Under the accrual method, you generally report income and deduct expenses in the year earned or incurred. This is true even if the income is received or the expense is paid in a later year.

5. Employee Health Care — The [Small Business Health Care Tax Credit](#) helps small businesses and tax-exempt organizations pay for health care coverage they offer their employees. A small employer is eligible for the credit if it has fewer than 25 employees who work full time, or a combination

of full time and part time. The maximum credit is 50 percent of premiums paid for small business employers and 35 percent of premiums paid for small tax-exempt employers, such as charities.

The [employer shared responsibility provisions](#) of the Affordable Care Act affect employers that employ at least a certain number of employees (generally 50 full-time employees or a combination of full-time and part-time employees). These employers are called applicable large employers. ALEs must either offer minimum essential coverage that is “affordable” and provides “minimum value” to their full-time employees (and their dependents), or potentially make an employer shared responsibility payment to the IRS. The vast majority of employers will fall

below the ALE threshold number of employees and, therefore, will not be subject to the employer shared responsibility provisions.

Employers also have [information reporting responsibilities](#) regarding minimum essential coverage they offer or provide to their full-time employees. Employers must send reports to employees and to the IRS on new forms the IRS created for this purpose.

Each state has additional requirements for starting and operating a business. For information regarding state-level requirements for starting a business, please refer to your [state government's website](#).

To find information about specific professions, visit the [IRS Industries/Professions Tax Centers Web](#) page.

Additional IRS Resources:

- [IRS Tax Calendar for Businesses and Self-Employed](#)
- [Publication 505](#), Tax Withholding and Estimated Tax
- [Publication 334](#), Tax Guide for Small Business
- [Publication 225](#), Farmers Tax guide
- [Publication 535](#), Business Expenses
- [Publication 587](#), Business Use of Your Home
- [Publication 510](#), Excise Taxes

IRS YouTube Videos:

- Small Business Health Care Tax Credit – [English](#) | [Spanish](#) | [ASL](#)
- IRS Online Tax Calendar – [English](#) | [Spanish](#) | [ASL](#)
- Simplified Home Office Deduction – [English](#) | [Spanish](#) | [ASL](#)

IRS Podcasts:

- Small Business Health Care Tax Credit – [English](#) | [Spanish](#)
- IRS Online Tax Calendar – [English](#) | [Spanish](#)
- Simplified Home Office Deduction – [English](#) | [Spanish](#)



IRS urges public to stay alert for scam phone calls

The IRS continues to warn consumers to guard against scam phone calls from thieves intent on stealing their money or their identity. Criminals pose as the IRS to trick victims out of their money or personal information. Here are several tips to help individuals avoid being a victim of these scams:

- **Scammers make unsolicited calls.** Thieves call taxpayers claiming to be IRS officials. They demand that the victim pay a bogus tax bill. They con the victim into sending cash, usually through a prepaid debit card or wire transfer. They may also leave “urgent” callback requests through phone “robo-calls,” or via phishing email. Callers try to scare their victims. Many phone scams use threats to intimidate and bully a victim into paying. They may even threaten to arrest, deport or revoke the license of their victim if they don’t get the money.
- **Scams use caller ID spoofing.** Scammers often alter caller ID to make it look like the IRS or another agency is calling. The callers use IRS titles and fake badge numbers to appear legitimate. They may use the victim’s name, address and other personal information to make the call sound official.
- **Cons try new tricks all the time.** Some schemes provide an actual IRS address where they tell the victim to mail a receipt for the payment they make. Others use emails that contain a fake IRS document with a phone number or an email address for a reply. They often use official IRS letterhead in emails or regular to make the ruse look official.

- **Scams cost victims over \$23 million.** The Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, or TIGTA, has received reports of about 736,000 scam contacts since October 2013. Nearly 4,550 victims have collectively paid over \$23 million as a result of the scam.

The IRS will not:

- Call to demand immediate payment. The IRS will not call you if you owe taxes without first sending you a bill in the mail.
- Demand that you pay taxes and not allow you to question or appeal the amount you owe.
- Require that you pay your taxes a certain way. For instance, require that you pay with a prepaid debit card.
- Ask for your credit or debit card numbers over the phone.
- Threaten to bring in police or other agencies to arrest you for not paying.

If you don’t owe taxes, or have no reason to think that you do:

- Do not give out any information. Hang up immediately.
- Contact TIGTA to report the call. Use their [“IRS Impersonation Scam Reporting”](#) web page. You can also call 800-366-4484.
- Report it to the Federal Trade Commission. Use the [“FTC Complaint Assistant”](#) on FTC.gov. Please add “IRS Telephone Scam” in the notes.

If you know you owe, or think you may owe tax:

- Call the IRS at 800-829-1040. IRS workers can help you.

Stay alert to scams that use the IRS as a lure. Tax scams can happen any time of year, not just at tax time. For more, visit [“Tax Scams and Consumer Alerts”](#) on IRS.gov.

Each and every taxpayer has a set of fundamental rights they should be aware of when dealing with the IRS. These are your [Taxpayer Bill of Rights](#). Explore your rights and our obligations to protect them on IRS.gov.

IRS YouTube Videos:

Tax Scams – [English](#) | [Spanish](#) | [ASL](#)

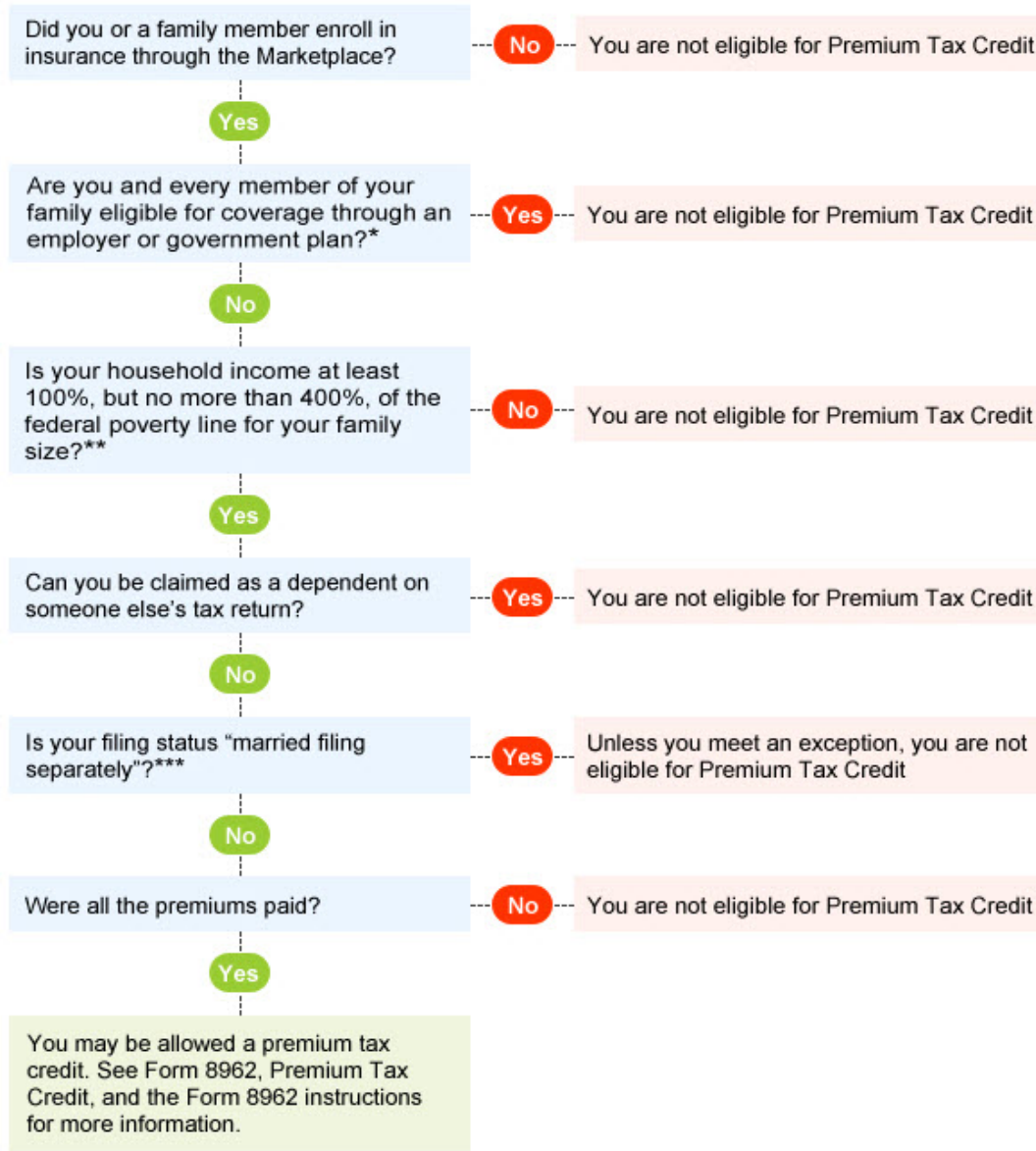
IRS Podcasts:

Tax Scams – [English](#) | [Spanish](#)

Premium Tax Credit Flow Chart: Are You Eligible?



The premium tax credit can help make purchasing health insurance coverage more affordable for people with moderate incomes. Answer the yes-or-no questions in the following chart ([or via the accessible text](#)), and follow the arrows to find out if you may be eligible for the premium tax credit.



* There are special rules about what it means to be eligible for employer or government coverage. See publication 974 for more information.

** Under special circumstances, you may be able to claim the PTC even though your income is below 100% of the FPL. See the instructions for Form 8962 for more information.

*** There are exceptions to the "married filing separately" rule. Certain victims of domestic abuse and spousal abandonment can claim the premium tax credit using the "married filing separately" filing status. See the instructions for Form 8962 for more information.

Quick reference links to IRS.gov

The following index will help you with the most common constituent questions:

- [Application for Tax Exempt Status](#)
- [Audit / Examination](#)
- [Collection](#)
- [Copies of Tax Returns](#)
- [Criminal Investigation](#)
- [Customer Service, Toll-Free](#)
- [Customer Assistance, Online Self-Help](#)
- [Disaster Assistance and Emergency Relief](#)
- [Discrimination Complaints](#)
- [Employee Misconduct, reporting to TIGTA](#)
- [Español](#)
- [Forms and Pubs](#)
- [Filing Returns with “Free File”](#)
- [Frivolous Arguments](#)
- [Health Care \(Affordable Care Act\)](#)
- [Identity Theft](#)
- [Innocent Spouse Tax Relief](#)
- [Individual Retirement Arrangements \(IRA\)](#)
- [ITIN / Form W-7](#)
- [Local IRS Offices \(Taxpayer Assistance Centers\)](#)
- [Penalties / Penalty Relief](#)
- [Pensions](#)
- [Refunds](#)
- [Return Preparer Fraud](#)
- [Statistics](#)
- [Taxpayer Advocate Service](#)
- [Transcripts](#)
- [Volunteer Sites offering Tax Return Preparation](#)
- [Whistleblower](#)



How to get IRS forms and publications

You can view, download and print the IRS tax forms, instructions and publications you need any time at www.irs.gov/forms in HTML, PDF and many as eBooks, without waiting.

As an alternative, you may also place orders **for free** over the phone at 800-829-3676. Orders should arrive within 10 business days. If a product is not available when you place your order, the IRS will send it as soon as it becomes available. Please do not place another order (Note that extreme weather can also delay shipments).

You can access Publication 17 in English and Spanish online from irs.gov/Pub17. It will also be available as a free e-Pub for downloading from IRS.gov and viewing on most e-Readers and other mobile devices.

Online help: free tax preparation assistance and self-help

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance and Tax Counseling for the Elderly programs offer [free tax preparation assistance](#) to taxpayers who qualify.

[IRS2Go](#) is a free app for smartphones that can help you find VITA and TCE sites near your home. IRS2Go is available in both English and Spanish. IRS2Go is the official smartphone app of the IRS.

You can also find local VITA and TCE sites using the tools on the IRS official website, www.irs.gov.

If you qualify, you can prepare your own basic federal and state tax returns online at no cost. Let [Free File](#) do the work for you with brand-name software or Free File Fillable Forms. You can use Free File through Oct. 15.

EITC Awareness Day - January 29, 2016

On Friday, January 29, groups engaged in financial literacy and tax education will work together to raise awareness of EITC by holding events, issuing statements and posting to social media. You are encouraged to do the same or to partner with the efforts of other organizations.

Help spread the word about EITC

Earned Income Tax Credit is a tax credit that can return as much as \$6,242 to people earning less than \$53,267. EITC puts money in the hands of hard-working taxpayers and can be a significant financial boost to individuals and their families. IRS estimates four of five eligible workers claim and get their EITC. Please help us reach that fifth eligible worker, the one who overlooks EITC.

Workers move in and out of EITC eligibility based on their tax filing status, number of qualifying children and financial situation. Every year, approximately one-third of EITC qualifiers are newly eligible taxpayers. This turnover rate requires continuous promotion of this beneficial credit.

EITC is not automatic. To get EITC, eligible constituents must file a federal income tax return, even if they are not otherwise required to file, and they must specifically claim the credit. Go to www.irs.gov/eitc for more information about EITC.

Also, IRS.gov has an online tool, the [EITC Assistant](#), which will be updated in early January for use with 2015 tax returns. Your constituents won't need to guess about EITC eligibility – they should use the EITC Assistant and be sure.

When checking your eligibility for EITC, don't overlook [other tax credits](#) for which you may qualify.