

**Accounting Aid Society
2020 Tax Assistance Program**

Site Coordinator Update for Saturday, January 25, 2020

In case of inclement weather, please check Accounting Aid Society's website for site closures.

Phone Numbers for Help

Do not hesitate to call us for assistance. Listed below are cell phone numbers that you can use:

- Primary Contacts:
 - Janet Huntoon (248) 946-1190 For tax law and TaxSlayer questions
 - Garrylle Smith (313) 556-1940 x1227 . . For staffing, facilities and supplies issues
 - Kasandra Ward (313) 671-3508 For computer and network setup issues
- Supporting Contacts
 - Kathy Holka (586) 703-4043 For tax law and TaxSlayer questions
 - Marshall Hunt (248) 514-0715 For tax law and TaxSlayer questions

We ask that only the site coordinators or assistant site coordinators use the cell phone numbers above to request assistance and that you not share our cell phone numbers with others.

*****PLEASE DO NOT E-FILE ANY RETURNS ON SATURDAY,
JANUARY 25th*****

Electronic filing will not be available until Monday, January 27, 2020; the IRS will “turn on” e-filing on that day. Please explain this to your clients, that his or her tax return will be e-filed beginning January 27.

The Quality Reviewer should still mark the return as Complete on the *Submission* page (if there are no issues and the tax return is ready to be e-filed/transmitted).

****ALL RETURNS COMPLETED ON January 25th WILL BE E-FILED
BY MAIN OFFICE****

EMAIL A COPY OF THE E-FILE SHEET AND THE CLIENT SIGN-IN SHEET TO GARYLLE SMITH AT gsmith@accountingaidsociety.org.

Please take time to write down both the federal and Michigan refund/tax due amount on the Client E-File Sheet for each client. This will make the bulk e-filing process more effective. We appreciate your cooperation.

Volunteer Tax Alert (VTA)

The IRS issued the first Volunteer Tax Alert (VTA) for the 2020 season. It is:

- [VTA 2020-01](#) Legislative Tax Extenders

This VTA provides information about recent extenders, including scope issues and training resources.

If you are assigned to a site this week it is in Tab 3 of the Site Manual, we'd appreciate it if you go over it with your volunteers/staff.

The IRS issues VTAs throughout the tax season. They are available at www.accountingaidresources.org and in the IRS Site Coordinator Corner at <https://www.irs.gov/individuals/quality-and-tax-alerts-for-irs-volunteer-programs>.

Step-by-Step

Please find the attached PDF for the Step-By-Step which did not make it in to the Site Box. You will need to open the PDF and print copies for your volunteers.

Posters

Please make sure that a current Publication 4053, *Your Civil Rights are Protected (Rev. 4-2015)* and Publication 4836, *VITA/TCE Free Tax Programs (Rev. 10-2017)* are posted at your site. If these versions are not in your Site Box, please print them from www.irs.gov. Pub 4053 must be posted at the first point of contact with taxpayers.

Volunteer Name Tags

Please make sure all volunteers are wearing a name tag that shows their first name and the first initial of their last name. Name tags are in the Site Boxes.

Census Flyers

Please make sure a census flyer is handed to each taxpayer with their completed return. For our non-Detroit sites, we will be providing another version of the flyer in the next week.

Income Guideline

The income guideline for having taxes prepared at an Accounting Aid Society tax site is \$56,000 or less for all taxpayers, both individuals and families.

Please be sure to adhere to this income limit. Advise screeners and preparers that they should add up all income, both taxable and nontaxable, during the intake/interview process to ensure that a person(s) total income is within our income guideline.

Site Procedures

Tablets at the Tax Sites – Instructions

Each tax site will have a tablet that the Site Coordinator will use. There should be a copy in Tab 11 of the Site Manual. Please review the instructions.

The Site Coordinator will use the tablet at the beginning of the day to access Gmail to retrieve verification codes for the multi-factor authentication (MFA) process. See Tab 9 of the Site Manual for instructions regarding MFA.

Volunteer Sign-in/Sign-out

Volunteers will sign in and out each shift using a Cerviskiosk on the site tablet; paper sign-in sheets will no longer be used. "*Volunteer Sign In_Out Instructions*" lists the instructions for the volunteer are in the Site Manual – Tab 11.

Michigan Service Fee Housing and Exempt Housing Lists

The 2019 Service Fee Housing database along with the Exempt Housing list are not yet available on the Michigan Department of Treasury's web site. We will post the 2019 lists to our Accounting Aid Resources page once they are available. The lists will also be available under the Tax Professionals button on the www.michigan.gov/taxes page at <http://www.michigan.gov/taxes/0,4676,7-238-43549---,00.html>.

In the meantime, use the prior year lists currently posted on Accounting Aid Society's Resources page. Go to <https://www.accountingaidresources.org/>, click on Tax Resources and then on Tax Preparer Tools. To search a list, press CTRL + F, then type in the zip code or the street name in the search box.

If the client's address is on the service fee housing list, the Homestead Property Tax Credit Claim should be filed accordingly. If the filer's address is on the tax exempt housing list, a claim should not be filed for the months lived in exempt housing.

If a taxpayer questions a listing, we recommend that they contact the property manager and/or building owner for clarification. They can also contact the Assessor's office for their city/township. It is ultimately the filer's responsibility to find out for certain the property tax status of the property – taxes were levied, a service fee was paid in lieu of taxes, or the housing was exempt from paying property taxes.

2019 Millage Rates

At the time of this update, a listing of the 2019 Michigan property tax millage rates was not yet available on Michigan Department of Treasury's web site. This can be an alternate source for determining property taxes levied for the year. The homeowner must provide proof of the taxable value and taxes levied of the home. We will let you know when Treasury has posted the listing.

Oakland County – For a municipality in Oakland County, you can access the following link to find the 2019 millage rates:

[https://www.oakgov.com/mgtbud/equal/PublishingImages/Lists/ACC%20%20Tax%20Reports/All Items/2019%20Apportionment%20of%20Local%20Tax%20Rates.pdf](https://www.oakgov.com/mgtbud/equal/PublishingImages/Lists/ACC%20%20Tax%20Reports/All%20Items/2019%20Apportionment%20of%20Local%20Tax%20Rates.pdf)

The township and village certified tax rates begin on page 12 of the PDF file (page 6 of the document). The city certified tax rates begin on page 17 of the PDF file (page 11 of the document).

- EXAMPLE: Pontiac homeowner with a 2019 taxable value of \$45,000 and a 100% principal residence exemption (PRE) for 2019. The homestead rate is used to calculate the taxes levied for the year; remember to include a 1% administrative fee in the calculation:

$$\$45,000 \times .0381524 \times 1.01 = \$1,734$$

Accounting Aid's Resources Web Site

Please remember to refer to our Resources page for additional reference materials useful to site operations and tax preparation. We will be adding to the page throughout the season. You can find the page at <https://www.accountingaidresources.org/>. Select Tax Resources, then Tax Preparer Tools. Copies of the Site Coordinator Updates will also be available on the Resources page.

Michigan HHC Updates/Delay

CHANGES TO HOME HEATING CREDIT CLAIM, FORM MI-1040CR-7

Now requires the heat provider name code and heat type code:

- Heat Provider Name Code – Name of Provider (DTE, Consumer, etc)
 - Heat Type Code - Natural gas = 300
 - US Citizens or Qualified Alien Status. Filer (and Spouse) must be US citizens or qualified aliens to be eligible for this credit. (Line 5).
 - Indicate whether each person in the household is a US citizen or qualified alien. (Line 17, column D) (TaxSlayer will carry forward)
- ALL claimants are required to enter this information, including renters whose heating costs are currently included in their rent

The filing of the Home Heating Credit will be delayed due to the MICR-7 has not been approved by the State of Michigan. Due to this we have added a return tag to identify returns that have the MICR-7. Please added this tag to all returns that include the MICR-7.

TaxSlayer Updates

We've tried to identify the more critical software issues you are likely to encounter this first week of tax preparation. However, if you encounter another issue or have a question, please contact Kathy Holka via phone or at kholka@accountingaidsociety.org.

➤ Unknown Social Security Number – Married Filing Separately Returns

If you have a return filed as Married Filing Separately and the spouse's Social Security number (SSN) is unknown, you must file the return by paper. However, TaxSlayer assumes it's an e-file return and will require the spouse's SSN on the *Personal Information* page. TaxSlayer suggests entering 111-00-1111 as the SSN; this will allow you to move off of the page.

- Be sure to then mark it is a Paper Return on the *E-file* page,
- Add a Note to the return explaining why a paper return was filed, and
- Cross out the erroneous SSN on ALL of the printed tax forms.

DO NOT use this procedure on any other type of return where a SSN is missing or unknown.

➤ E-file Page – Consent Forms: There will be two Consent Forms on the *E-file* page:

- Consent to Disclose/Use Information to the VITA program's Relational Offices
 - The taxpayer and spouse (if applicable) should be given the option to grant or deny the consent; we suggest that they accept the consent.
 - Explain that accepting/granting the consent will allow their tax return information to be shared with Accounting Aid Society's main office for reporting purposes and will allow the e-filing of their 2018 tax return.
 - Note: Choosing to deny this consent will mean that a paper return will have to be prepared for 2019; the return cannot be e-filed.
 - The taxpayer (and spouse, if applicable) **MUST** enter the five-digit PIN in this section. The PIN is their signature granting the consent (or denying); they don't have to remember the number. (The preparer can enter the date.)
- Consent to Disclose Tax Return Information to VITA/TCE Tax Preparation Sites (This is the global carryforward consent.)
 - The taxpayer and spouse (if applicable) should be given the option to grant or deny the consent; we suggest that they accept the consent.
 - Explain that accepting/granting the consent will allow their 2018 tax return information to be pulled forward to any VITA/TCE tax site they visit next year for tax year 2019.
 - Note: Choosing to deny this consent will not affect tax return preparation for 2019.
 - The taxpayer (and spouse, if applicable) **MUST** enter the five-digit PIN in this section. The PIN is their signature granting the consent (or denying); they don't have to remember the number. (The preparer can enter the date.)

➤ Printing

- Please choose the following print sets from the drop down menu on the *Submission* page or from the Client List page:
 - For E-file returns – AAS (E-file Return) FEDERAL & STATE PRINT SET
 - You will note that this print set has the federal Form 1040 and Schedules 1 through 3. Page 1 and 2 of the 1040 will be on one page, Schedules 1 through 3 are on one page, and Schedules 4 through 6 are on one page. All of these pages will have a watermark of "Do Not Mail".
 - For Paper returns – 2019 PAPER FILE COPY
 - If a paper return must be prepared (should be rare), select the 2019 PAPER FILE COPY print set. This print set will print out the federal Form 1040, pages 1 and 2, and applicable Schedules 1 through 3 each on its own page as is required by the IRS for returns to be mailed in. (Note: Accounting Aid will develop their own print set for paper returns by next week.)