

Tax Topics

Filing Taxes For Free Can Offer Savings

(NAPSA)—There's good news for Americans looking for ways to save money. Surprising as it may sound, there is a way to file your taxes that can be less taxing—and can help you save time and money.

Made possible through the Free File Alliance, a public-private partnership between the IRS and nearly 20 of the leading tax software companies, the program is called Free File, and it's available exclusively from the IRS.

Already used by 33 million taxpayers, it's designed to provide a fast, safe and easy filing option. Some products are even available in Spanish.

What You Need to Know

Free File Options: The Free File program is available to all taxpayers. Brand-name tax software is available to those who made \$57,000 or less in 2011. If you made more than \$57,000, Free File's online fillable forms are the electronic alternative to IRS paper forms and have no income limit for eligibility.

How it Works

Step 1: Collect your tax information and log on to Free File through the IRS website: www.irs.gov/freefile.

Step 2: Choose an option: Tax software or fillable forms.

- **Software:** You don't need to be a tax expert to use tax software. Browse the list of brand-name tax software companies. The "Help Me Choose A Company" option will direct you to the most suitable software. Follow the instructions on the company's website and Free File.

- **Free File Fillable Forms:** The electronic forms perform basic math calculations and are de-



By e-filing your federal return and selecting direct deposit, you can get a refund in as few as 10 days.

signed for people who are comfortable preparing their own paper tax returns.

Step 3: E-file your return for free.

No matter what option you choose, IRS and software providers use the most current technology to ensure tax information is secure.

Getting Your Refund

By e-filing your return and selecting direct deposit, you can get a refund in as few as 10 days. You can even track your return with the "Where's My Refund?" tool on the IRS website. Or you can download IRS2Go, the new IRS smartphone application, so you'll always know the status of your refund.

What if You Can't Meet the April 17, 2012 Filing Deadline?

You can use either Free File software or online fillable forms to file an extension—just remember it's an extension to file, not an extension to pay. Use Free File to complete and submit Form 4868. Return to Free File by October 15, 2012 to file your return.

