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TAXPAYER *Tips*

Free Tax Help Available for the Military

ANNAPOLIS (March 23, 2017) -- The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program provides free tax help to military members and their families. On or off base, VITA is easy to find — even overseas. Keep these five tips in mind about free tax help for the military:

1. **Armed Forces Tax Council.** The Armed Forces Tax Council directs the military tax programs offered worldwide.

2. **Certified Staff.** Military VITA-certified employees staff these sites. They receive training on [military tax issues](#), like tax benefits for service in a combat zone. They can help with [special extensions](#) of time to file tax returns and to pay taxes or with special rules that apply to the Earned Income Tax Credit.

3. **What to Bring.** Take the following records to a military VITA site:

- Valid photo identification.
- Social Security numbers for the taxpayer, their spouse and dependents; or individual taxpayer identification numbers (ITINs) or adoption taxpayer identification numbers (ATINs) for those who don't have Social Security numbers.
- Birth dates for the taxpayer, their spouse and dependents.
- Wage and earning forms, such as Forms W-2, W-2G, and 1099-R.
- Interest and dividend statements (Forms 1099).
- A copy of last year's federal and state tax returns, if available
- Routing and account numbers for direct deposit of a tax refund.
- Total amount paid for day care and the day care provider's identifying number. This is usually an Employer Identification Number or Social Security number.

- Other relevant information about income and expenses.

4. **Joint Returns.** If married filing a joint return, generally both persons need to sign. If both can't be present to sign the return, they should bring a valid power of attorney form unless eligible for an exception. [Publication 501](#), Exemptions, Standard Deduction, and Filing Information, has more details.

5. **Use IRS Free File.** Taxpayers with income of \$64,000 or less qualify for Free File software. Those with income more than \$64,000 can use Free File Fillable Forms. Using the IRS2Go app, a taxpayer can now use their cell phone or tablet to prepare and e-file their federal tax return through IRS Free File.

Taxpayers should keep a copy of their tax return. Beginning in 2017, taxpayers using a software product for the first time may need their Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) amount from their prior-year tax return to verify their identity. Taxpayers can learn more about how to verify their identity and electronically sign tax returns at [Validating Your Electronically Filed Tax Return](#).

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