Accounting Aid Society
Site Coordinator Update – January 28, 2023

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

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Volunteer Tax Alerts

Three Volunteer Tax Alerts (VTAs) have been issued by the IRS so far for the current filing season. The alerts are listed below; please share the information with volunteers and staff.

- **VTA 2023-01, Voter Registration Information**
  Question #7 on page 3 on the Intake/Interview & Quality Review Sheet, Form 13614-C, asks the taxpayer if they would like information on how to vote and/or how to register to vote. If the taxpayer answers Yes, the information is on:
  - The latest version of the large client envelope (IRS Pub 730, Important Tax Records-Envelope, revised 9-2022)
  - VTA 2023-01. If your site has older revisions of the large client envelope, print the VTA and give it to the taxpayer.
- VTA 2023-02, Certification Testing Using Practice Lab – This VTA, issued in December 2022, has since been removed from the IRS web site as testing issues have been resolved.
- **VTA 2023-03, EITC Updates**
  The VTA provides clarification on the special rule for separated spouses claiming the EIC. There are changes noted on the VTA to Publication 4012 that are not included in Publication 4491-X (see below).

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

Accounting Aid Society's Resources Page

A reminder about the many reference materials and resources useful for site operation and the tax preparation process available on our Resources page at https://www.accountingaidresources.org, including the required federal reference materials, IRS Publications 17 and 4012. In addition to the federal reference materials, there are Michigan and city instructions, Step by Step, the Site Manual, Site Coordinator Updates, the alerts from the IRS (VTAs and QSRAs (Quality Site Requirement Alerts)), and more. You'll find everything under the Resources tab. Please familiarize yourself with the information available on the page and share with your staff and volunteers.

Site Administration

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. 9-2020)* are posted at your site. If these versions are not in your Site Box, please print them from www.irs.gov. Publication 4053 must be posted at the first point of contact with taxpayers.

NAME TAGS

All staff and volunteers working at a tax site must wear a name tag. Please make sure everyone is wearing a name tag that shows their first name and the first initial of their last name. Name tags are in the Site Boxes.

CHECKING VOLUNTEER IDENTIFICATION

Please remember to verify the identity of new volunteers at your site by checking their photo identification.

INCOME GUIDELINE

The income guideline for having taxes prepared at an Accounting Aid Society tax site is $60,000 or less for all taxpayers, both individuals and families. 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.

CLIENT INFORMATION

Please do not have clients email you any personal identifiable information (PII) or tax documents. The best method to receive client information is by using the QR code to directly send the information to a ShareFile Folder for the tax site. This process ensures that the information remains encrypted and protected.

CHROMEBOOK LOGINS

Please refrain from logging into personal information on the Chromebooks. The logins are synced together to allow for better management and security. Your information may be viewable by others at your site.

IRS Publication 4491-X, VITA/TCE Training Supplement (2022 Returns)

IRS Publication 4491-X has been issued and contains corrections and updates to Publication 4012 and Publication 4491, in addition to other IRS materials. At the time of this Site Coordinator Update, the electronic version of Pub 4012 had not been updated to reflect the changes listed in Pub 4491-X.

When referencing Pub 4012, you *must* review Pub 4491-X to see if there have been any changes to the information presented in the 4012. Please see information above for VTA 2023-03, EITC Updates, for changes to Pub 4012 that were not included in Pub 4491-X.
(Note: Hard copies of Publication 4012 are in the Site Boxes. If time permits at your tax site, you can print the replacement pages from Publication 4491-X and insert them in the 4012.)

Michigan Issues

MICHIGAN INTAKE/INTERVIEW SHEET – AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE AND AUTO PIP

The second question in Part VI, Health Insurance, on page 2 of Accounting Aid's Michigan Intake/Interview Sheet, asks, "Did the taxpayer or spouse pay for automobile insurance during the tax year?". In addition, we should be asking and making sure that auto PIP (personal injury protection) was not waived before answering Yes to this question and allowing the $130 safe harbor deduction for the medical care portion of auto insurance.

MICHIGAN SERVICE FEE HOUSING AND EXEMPT HOUSING LISTS

Michigan Department of Treasury has indicated that they will provide a 2022 Service Fee Housing database along with the Exempt Housing list; however, the lists have not yet been posted to Treasury's website. In the meantime, when preparing Homestead Property Tax Credit Claims for renters, use the 2019 lists which are posted on our Resources page. The lists should be referenced often.

If the client's address is on the service fee housing list, the Homestead Property Tax Credit Claim should be filed accordingly. If the 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.

TaxSlayer Issues

Messaging System on the Welcome Page

TaxSlayer has a new messaging system on the Welcome page which you may have noticed when preparing returns in the Practice Lab. TaxSlayer intends to use this system to get extremely important messages out to all users. If you are experiencing issues with the software, please first check this messaging system for any updates. The VITA Blog will still be used for everyday TaxSlayer updates. Note: Once a notification has been read, it can be dismissed by clicking on the small "x" to the right of the message's title.

Taxpayer Return Questions/Custom Questions

As was discussed at the Site Coordinator Meeting, we have added a selection of "Prefer not to answer" to the answer options for question #12 on the Taxpayer Return Questions (question #13 in TaxSlayer's Custom Questions).

Custom Credits

Be aware that at the time of this update, the order of our Custom Credits on the e-file page is not in number-order. Please make sure the preparers are entering the amounts in the correct fields as listed in the software.

Rejected Returns

Please note that rejected returns prepared at our volunteer tax sites will be handled by the Main Office.