When to Request Transcripts

Before requesting transcripts through the LITC process, staff should first encourage and assist clients with creating or accessing their online IRS account whenever appropriate (unless there are missing documents and we would otherwise be able to efile, then we should get transcripts through LITC). Through their IRS account, clients can often access the transcripts needed for tax preparation as well as view IRS notices and letters that may provide additional information.

If the client is unable or unwilling to access their online IRS account, or if creating an account could create difficulties for the client in the future (for example, an elderly client who may not remember their login information), staff may proceed with requesting transcripts through the process outlined below.

Situations where transcripts may be needed include:

Prior Year Returns

- The client is filing one or more prior year returns and is unsure about income, withholding, estimated tax payments, or other tax information.
- The client does not have all tax documents needed to complete the return.

Duplicate SSN Rejects

- A return is rejected because a taxpayer's or dependent's Social Security number has already been used on a filed return.
- Transcripts are needed to verify what return was filed under the Social Security number and help determine whether the reject may be the result of identity theft, a filing by another taxpayer, or confusion about a return that was previously filed.

Amendments

- An amended return is being prepared and transcripts are needed to verify what was originally filed, processed, **or adjusted** by the IRS.
- The original return information is unavailable or incomplete.

Missing Tax Documents

- The client is missing a tax document that they know should be reported on the return and is unable to obtain a replacement from the issuer (for example, a W-2 from an employer that is no longer in business).

Additional Review Needed

If staff assist a client with accessing their IRS account and have questions about the information available, or if a client has missing tax documents, staff should contact Austin for guidance. Austin can determine whether LITC transcripts should be requested or whether additional information is needed before proceeding.

Requesting Transcripts for Clients

If a client comes into the tax site and transcripts need to be pulled for tax preparation or amendment purposes, follow these steps:

Step 1: Sign into Sharefile and open the Shared VITA-LITC folder.

Step 2: Create a folder in "**_ Requested Transcripts**" with the clients name.

Step 3: Scan and upload the clients **Social Security Card** and **Photo ID** (If MFJ upload taxpayer AND spouse ID and SSC) to the folder you created. Also upload any **IRS notices** or **completed tax returns** for the year(s) transcripts are requested. Rename the files as what they are, including tax years if applicable. Please make sure each letter and/or return are scanned as individual documents.

Step 4: Complete the fillable Form 8821 (The most updated copy can always be found in Sharefile in the VITA-LITC folder). It must be downloaded in order to edit it.

- If **both** taxpayer and spouse need transcripts pulled, **both** need Form 8821 completed.
- Delete any default wording (name, address, year(s) or period(s)).
- The name **and** address **MUST** be entered as what the IRS **currently** has on file for the client (the name and address as it appeared on their last tax return).
- Enter their social security number and phone number.
- Print the form and have the client sign (in cursive) and date part 6 in **BLACK** pen. Please don't put an "x" or any other marking where they need to sign and date, just point it out to the client as this could cause issues when trying to send the form to the IRS.
    - Virtual signatures are acceptable on this form if needed
- Scan and upload the form to their folder you created in Sharefile.
- Keep the original signed form in a secure place at your site, DO NOT give the client a copy.

Step 5: Complete the 7216 letter (The most updated copy can always be found in Sharefile in the VITA-LITC folder). It must also be downloaded in order to edit it.

- Type the clients' name as entered on the 8821.
- Print the letter and have the client sign (in cursive) and date above their name.
    - Virtual signatures are acceptable on this form if needed
- Scan and upload the form to their folder you created in Sharefile.
- Keep the original signed letter in a secure place at your site, the client may have a copy if they request it.

Step 6: Complete the Transcript Request Form

- Bookmark this form! It is also available on each sites site coordinator homepage in Quickbase
- Make sure the form states exactly why the transcripts need to be pulled

Step 7: Change the stage and status of the tax return or amendment to "**In Production**" - "**Transcripts Requested**"