



# Looking for a Tax Preparer? Here's what you should know...



## What is a tax preparer?

A tax preparer is a person who prepares and files income tax returns for others.

## When choosing a tax preparer, consider the following suggestions.

- Avoid preparers who say they can get larger refunds than others.
- Avoid preparers that use a percentage of the refund as their fee.
- Use a preparer who signs your return and gives you a copy of the return.
- Never sign a blank tax form. Before signing your return, check it and ensure it is correct. You are responsible for everything on your return, even if it is done incorrectly by the preparer.
- To find a list of preparers near you, check the IRS.gov Preparer Directory.
- Ensure the preparer signs and includes their preparer tax identification number (PTIN). Paid tax return preparers must have a PTIN to prepare tax returns.
- **Ask the preparer if they are an/a:**
  - accredited tax preparer; or
  - enrolled agent; or
  - Certified Public Accountant (CPA); or
  - licensed public accountant; or
  - tax attorney
- If you need to ask questions about the preparation of your return, make sure the preparer or firm will be around for months or years after filing.
- Get information about free tax help. Call “First Call” at 211 or 1-216-436-2000 or the IRS at 1-800-829-1040.
- Locate a free tax preparer near you. For a VITA site, go to [www.irs.treasury.gov/freetaxprep/](http://www.irs.treasury.gov/freetaxprep/) or call 1-800-906-9887.
  - **For seniors**, go to [www.aarp.org/money/taxes/aarp\\_taxaide/locations.html](http://www.aarp.org/money/taxes/aarp_taxaide/locations.html) or call AARP at 1-888-227-7669.

**Call 1-866-481-3669**

**Tennessee Taxpayer Project**

**Low Income Taxpayer Clinic**

**A Project of the Legal Aid Society**



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