

Who Needs to File a Return and Why They Should

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You are required to file a federal income tax return if your income is above a certain level, which varies depending on your filing status, age and the type of income you receive. However, the Internal Revenue Service reminds taxpayers that some people should file even if they aren't required to because they may get a refund if they had taxes withheld or they may qualify for refundable credits.

To find out if you need to file, check the Individuals section of the IRS website at www.irs.gov or consult the instructions for Form 1040, 1040A or 1040EZ for specific details that may help you determine if you need to file a tax return with the IRS this year. You can also use the Interactive Tax Assistant available on the IRS website. The ITA tool is a tax law resource that takes you through a series of questions and provides you with responses to tax law questions.

Even if you don't have to file for 2011, here are six reasons why you may want to:

- 1. Federal Income Tax Withheld** You should file to get money back if your employer withheld federal income tax from your pay, you made estimated tax payments, or had a prior year overpayment applied to this year's tax.
- 2. Earned Income Tax Credit** You may qualify for EITC if you worked, but did not earn a lot of money. EITC is a refundable tax credit; which means you could qualify for a tax refund. To get the credit you must file a return and claim it.
- 3. Additional Child Tax Credit** This refundable credit may be available if you have at least one qualifying child and you did not get the full amount of the Child Tax Credit.
- 4. American Opportunity Credit Students** in their first four years of postsecondary education may qualify for as much as \$2,500 through this credit. Forty percent of the credit is refundable so even those who owe no tax can get up to \$1,000 of the credit as cash back for each eligible student.
- 5. Adoption Credit** You may be able to claim a refundable tax credit for qualified expenses you paid to adopt an eligible child.
- 6. Health Coverage Tax Credit** Certain individuals who are receiving Trade Adjustment Assistance, Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance, Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance or pension benefit payments from the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, may be eligible for a 2011 Health Coverage Tax Credit.

Eligible individuals can claim a significant portion of their payments made for qualified health insurance premiums.

For more information about filing requirements and your eligibility to receive tax credits, visit www.irs.gov.