

H&R Block Announces Renewal Process Opens Early for ITINs Expiring by Year End

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Important credits on the line for 1.3 million tax identification numbers set to expire

KANSAS CITY, Mo., June 29, 2017 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Following last year's first wave of [expiring individual taxpayer identification numbers \(ITINs\)](#), the IRS is opening the renewal process three months early for the next wave of an estimated 1.3 million expirations. Taxpayers who haven't used their ITIN on a tax return for 2014, 2015, or 2016 and taxpayers with middle digits 70, 71, 72 and 80 will see their ITIN expire by the end of this year.

"The early start to this year's ITIN renewal process is good news for the one million people who could have to submit original copies of important documents like their passports to the IRS," said Kathy Pickering, vice president of The Tax Institute at H&R Block. "The earlier they get started, the more time they have to find a trusted tax professional who can help them avoid unnecessary delays and burdensome paperwork requirements."

Before the Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes (PATH) Act was enacted in December 2015, ITINs (like Social Security numbers) had no expiration date. However, the PATH Act requires ITINs to expire on a staggered basis. The first round of expirations in 2016 affected ITIN holders with a middle digit of 78 or 79 as well as those who had not used their ITIN on a tax return for 2013, 2014, or 2015.

Eligibility requirements for credits makes timely renewal important

The PATH Act also implemented new rules about eligibility for the child tax credit (CTC) and American opportunity credit (AOC). Taxpayers and qualifying children must have a valid taxpayer identification number issued by the due date of the return to claim the CTC or AOC. Before the PATH Act, taxpayers could file late or amended returns to claim credits after obtaining a taxpayer identification number.

Like last year, the IRS will accept returns filed with expired ITINs, disallow the credits and begin letter correspondence with the taxpayer. When the taxpayer completes the renewal process, the ITIN will maintain its original issue date, meaning the taxpayer can continue to claim the CTC and AOC if they qualify. Taxpayers who submit renewal paperwork with their 2017 tax return will also be allowed to claim these credits once their renewals are completed.

"It can take 14 weeks or more to get an ITIN during the tax filing season, so the window was narrow to get an ITIN renewed," said Pickering. "This allowance, coupled with the early opening of the renewal process, widens the window for taxpayers so they don't lose out on important tax benefits. Still, filing a return and claiming credits will be quicker and easier if they complete their renewals by the end of the year."

How to submit an ITIN renewal application

Individuals whose ITINs will be expiring should ensure that they have current documents showing proof of identity and foreign status. The IRS accepts original and unexpired passports as stand-alone proof of identity and foreign status for primary taxpayers and spouses and for dependents in some cases.

If one person's ITIN expires this year, everyone in the household can renew their ITIN at the same time, even if they have not all expired. This will consolidate the paperwork for the family so they do not have to repeat the process one by one.

Certified Acceptance Agents (CAA) can reduce paperwork requirements

A CAA undergoes specialized training and is approved by the IRS to assist with the ITIN process by preparing the ITIN application, verifying supporting documents and then submitting the ITIN application to the IRS. Because a CAA can verify the supporting documents, the applicant does not need to send their original identification documents to the IRS. CAAs can also assist with ITIN applications for dependents. CAAs can also verify passports and birth certificates for

dependents.

Free ITIN renewal with tax preparation at H&R Block

In addition to approximately 18,000 bilingual tax professionals and client service professionals, H&R Block has more than 2,000 CAAs located across the country. H&R Block offers the millions of taxpayers who use an individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN) a free ITIN renewal with tax preparation.

Taxpayers can [make an appointment online](#) or call 1-800-HRBLOCK.

About H&R Block

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