

H&R Block to Offer Free Online Tax Help as April 16 Tax Deadline Looms

April 9, 2001 12:09 PM ET

KANSAS CITY, Mo., April 9 /PRNewswire/ -- Hoping to claim your Great Dane as a dependent because he eats more than your children do? Want to know if your vacation could be tax-deductible because you gave your resume to a business owner you met on the beach?

Get answers to those questions and any other last-minute tax queries you may have at hrblock.com during the last week of tax season. Starting tonight, H&R Block will offer free nightly online chat sessions to all taxpayers during this hectic -- and often intimidating -- period of the tax season. From April 9 through April 13, taxpayers can visit <http://www.hrblock.com> between 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. (EST) and submit their last-minute tax questions to an H&R Block tax expert.

"We think people who are crunching to complete their taxes this late in the game will appreciate having a free, easy way to get answers to their general tax questions without having to get up from their desk," said Mark Ernst, president and chief executive officer of H&R Block.

In addition to the week long series of chats, Block will also offer a free daylong chat session from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. (EST) on April 16 -- the day taxpayers must have their returns postmarked and on their way to the Internal Revenue Service.

Due to the high volume of questions, not every question submitted during the chat sessions will be answered. However, for people needing last-minute answers to their questions, help is still available. Taxpayers can get specific answers to their tax situation by using Block's Ask A Tax Advisor service. For just \$19.95 per solution, consumers can ask their questions by phone, email or instant chat to one of H&R Block's tax professionals.

Of course, if a customer prefers a more traditional tax preparation process or wishes to meet the tax preparer in person, all of the H&R Block offices nationwide will be open late April 16. Ernst says Block is committed to helping taxpayers file accurate returns, on time, in the most comfortable way possible -- right up until midnight.

"Our offices are normally open until 9 p.m.," Ernst says. "But we'll remain open that night until the last customer is served."

About H&R Block

H&R Block Inc. (NYSE: HRB) is a diversified company with subsidiaries providing a wide range of financial products and services. In 2000, H&R Block served 19.2 million taxpayers -- more than any tax or accounting firm -- through its more than 10,000 offices located in the United States, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom. H&R Block served another 1.8 million tax clients through its award-winning software program, Kiplinger TaxCut(R), and through its new online tax preparation services. Investment services and securities products are offered through H&R Block Financial Advisors Inc., member NYSE, SIPC. H&R Block Inc. is not a registered broker-dealer. H&R Block Mortgage Corporation and Option One Mortgage Corporation offer a full range of home mortgage products. RSM McGladrey Inc. is a national accounting, tax and consulting firm with 100 offices nationwide, as well as an affiliation with 550 offices in 75 countries as the U.S. member of RSM International. Quarterly results and other information are available on the company's Web site at <http://www.hrblock.com> . SOURCE H&R Block

CONTACT: Neil Getzlow, 816-932-4886, or ngetzlow@hrblock.com , or Janine Smiley, 816-932-4871, or jsmiley@hrblock.com , both of H&R Block