

## **IRS Promotes Penalty Relief for Taxpayers**

September 14, 2015 3:23 PM ET

### **H&R Block Celebrates Latest Steps to Streamline Penalty Relief**

KANSAS CITY, MO -- (Marketwired) -- 09/14/15 -- H&R Block (NYSE: HRB) -- The IRS issues more than 40 million penalties to taxpayers every year. Now, taxpayers are getting a new and improved message from the IRS when they receive notices about failure-to-file and failure-to-pay penalties. These notices include a new insert that clearly explains taxpayers' options for requesting penalty relief, including a little-known provision that many taxpayers qualify for. In fact, more than 9 out of 10 taxpayers who would have qualified for this penalty relief provision have traditionally failed to claim it -- mostly because they didn't know to ask for it.

That's why H&R Block (NYSE: HRB), the world's largest consumer tax preparation company, has worked on behalf of taxpayers since 2011 to improve transparency. H&R Block offers services to help taxpayers with penalties, including a free consultation with a tax resolution expert to make sure the IRS notice is correct and to address the penalty and underlying issue.

"Taxpayers receive many notices every year proposing penalties and many need a second look for accuracy. Account errors, incorrect information and even tax identity theft can cause IRS notices to be sent in error," said Jim Buttonow, director of tax practice and procedure for H&R Block. "Taxpayers have to ask themselves if they qualify for penalty relief before paying a proposed penalty to the IRS. H&R Block tax professionals can help clients get to the heart of the issue and propose any available relief options."

Penalties are the most common IRS issue that taxpayers experience. The most common reasons for getting a penalty are filing or paying late. Fortunately, the IRS offers different types of penalty relief.

#### ***First-timers may qualify for relief***

A common type of relief is for taxpayers who have a history of filing and paying on time, called first-time penalty abatement. But because of a widespread lack of awareness about this option, 92 percent of taxpayers who qualify for first-time abatement traditionally haven't requested it. Through its active role with industry and the IRS to improve tax administration, H&R Block has asked for improved transparency and clear instructions to taxpayers about the availability of [first-time penalty abatement](#) and other penalty relief provisions.

The IRS's new message in penalty notices calls attention to first-time abatement, as well as reasonable cause penalty relief, which allows taxpayers to explain to the IRS why they couldn't file and/or pay on time. Reasonable cause relief operates within a set of rules, so it's a good idea for taxpayers to consult an H&R Block tax professional to get help requesting this relief.

"The ability to obtain penalty relief is easier than ever if a taxpayer qualifies," Buttonow said. "Our education and outreach in this area have paid off for all taxpayers, who now have clear and better information on what options they have if they get an IRS penalty."

H&R Block tax professionals not only have tax preparation expertise, but are also trained in resolving every tax issue including audits, notices and penalty relief. Taxpayers can make an appointment at H&R Block's offices by either calling 800-HRBLOCK or visiting [www.hrblock.com](http://www.hrblock.com).

#### ***About H&R Block***

H&R Block, Inc. (NYSE: HRB) is the world's largest consumer tax services provider. More than 680 million tax returns have been prepared worldwide by and through H&R Block since 1955. In fiscal 2015, H&R Block had annual revenues of nearly \$3.1 billion with 24.2 million tax returns prepared worldwide. Tax return preparation services are provided by professional tax preparers in approximately 12,000 company-owned and franchise retail tax offices worldwide, and

through H&R Block tax software products. H&R Block also offers adjacent Tax Plus products and services. For more information, visit the H&R Block Newsroom at <http://newsroom.hrblock.com/>.

For Further Information

Gene King

816-854-4287

[mediadesk@hrblock.com](mailto:mediadesk@hrblock.com)

Source: H&R Block