

# Money for Life

February 2005

Dear Readers,

This issue of “Money for Life” focuses on free resources available from the Internal Revenue Service to assist as you complete your 2004 tax forms. The IRS offers free assistance by computer, fax, telephone and in person. The IRS can help taxpayers get forms and publications and answer a wide range of tax questions. The IRS can also help find free tax preparation services for those who qualify.



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## Personal Computer

On [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov), the IRS Web site, taxpayers can access a wealth of free tax information. Check out 1040 Central, a special section of the Web site that has all the help, updates and information taxpayers need to prepare and file their returns. Taxpayers can readily access necessary forms, instructions or publications; get answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs); and use the new EITC Assistant to find out whether they qualify for the earned income tax credit.



Taxpayers may also check their refund status using IRS.gov’s “Where’s My Refund?” tool. They will

need to enter a Social Security number, filing status (such as single or married filing jointly) and the amount of the refund shown on their 2004 tax return. They will then see a Web page that shows the status of their refund payment as well as instructions to resolve refund-related problems.

## TaxFax Service



Taxpayers may have the IRS fax them forms and publications directly. Just call 1-703-368-9694 from any fax machine and follow the directions at the prompts. Taxpayers will need to enter the catalog number for any requested items, which will be faxed directly to their machine.

## Telephone

Taxpayers may also order current and prior year forms, instructions and publications by calling 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676). Taxpayers may ask tax questions by calling the toll-free customer service line at 1-800-829-1040. TTY/TDD users may call 1-800-829-4059 to ask tax questions or to order forms and publications.

## TeleTax

Taxpayers may call 1-800-829-4477 to hear pre-recorded messages covering various tax topics or to check on the status of their refund. TeleTax topics, which range from “IRS assistance” to “who must file,” are listed on pages 8 and 9 of the Form 1040 Instruction booklet, available at IRS.gov — just type “1040” in the forms and publications search box.





### **Tax Forms and Publications Walk-In Service**

Many post offices, libraries and IRS offices have tax publications, forms and instructions available to pick up. Check “Contact My Local Office” on IRS.gov for office locations.

### **Taxpayer Assistance Centers**

IRS Taxpayer Assistance Centers are taxpayers’ source for personal, face-to-face tax help. Taxpayers who have complex issues, need to resolve a tax problem, or are more comfortable talking with someone in person can visit a local Taxpayer Assistance Center. IRS representatives in these offices can help with inquiries or adjustments to tax accounts, payment plans for those who owe tax and cannot pay the full amount, questions about IRS letters and notices, and levies on wages or bank accounts.

Although appointments are not necessary, taxpayers may call ahead to leave messages requesting convenient appointments to resolve tax issues, or to hear recorded messages with office hours and addresses.

#### **Iowa Taxpayer Assistance Centers**

Cedar Rapids	(319) 364-5327
Davenport	(563) 326-6052
Des Moines	(515) 284-4240
Fort Dodge	(515) 576-1744
Sioux City	(712) 274-8019
Waterloo	(319) 234-5719

A phone interpreter is available for non-English speaking taxpayers

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### **Assistance with Returns**

Free tax preparation is available through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) programs in many communities. Volunteers help prepare basic returns for taxpayers with low or limited incomes. Call 1-800-829-1040 to find the VITA or TCE site nearest you. Taxpayers may also call AARP — the largest TCE participant — at 1-888-227-7669 to find the closest Tax Aide site.



### **Free File**

The Internal Revenue Service offers a free e-file program. If you qualify, you can prepare and file your federal tax return using Free File. Free File is online tax preparation and electronic filing through a partnership agreement between the IRS and the Free File Alliance, LLC. The partnership agreement calls for free tax preparation and filing to at least 60 percent of all taxpayers or approximately 78 million individuals who file an individual tax return.

To access the service, go to the IRS Web site at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) and choose from about two dozen providers. Each software provider sets their own eligibility requirements. The company's tax software prepares and e-files your federal income tax returns to the IRS using the established *e-file* system, which uses secure telephone lines.

More information is on the IRS website at: <http://www.irs.gov/efile/>

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