



CASH NEWS

TAX YEAR 2008, FEBRUARY

VERY STRONG START

After the first four weekends this year, the CASH Oregon and AARP Tax-Aide sites in the three Portland area counties have prepared 3,833 federal and 2,998 state tax returns. Federal Earned Income credits total \$1.8 million, with federal tax refunds of \$4.97 million. The largest volume sites are at Lloyd Center, the Milwaukie Center, Rockwood Weed and Seed, and at the libraries in Hillsboro and Beaverton.

Jim Harper, Executive Director of CASH Oregon, says: "I am delighted with our results. Our continuing partnership with AARP Tax-Aide is showing real benefits to lower income families and seniors in our community. We also owe our success to the tireless volunteer tax preparers, and to CASH Forum members and partners for continuing to get the word out."

Next Forum meeting: March 14, 9am
Call Jim at 503-243-7765 for details

GET THE WORD OUT

It is not too late to let the people and organizations you work with know about our free tax preparation service. The IRS estimates 25% of eligible taxpayers do not receive the earned income tax credit. Remember! This credit is refundable! Even if no taxes are owed, the taxpayer may receive a check. For head of households this year at Lloyd Center, the average EIC is over \$1,500 and the average refund is \$2,500.

Plus this year to receive the economic stimulus check, an individual must have filed a tax return for 2007, even if they are not required to file for any other reason. It is important that we all get this word out. Call us for free outreach materials

This is the third year that CASH Oregon has been offering free tax preparation in partnership with AARP Tax-Aide for the three Portland metropolitan counties. Last year together over 11,700 tax returns were prepared for free.

STIMULUS CHECK REQUIRES A FILED 2007 RETURN !!

To receive an economic stimulus check, you must file a 2007 tax return. Most taxpayers just need to file a 2007 tax return as usual. No other action, forms or calls are necessary.

The law also allows for payments for select taxpayers who have no tax liability, such as low-income workers or those in 2007 who receive Social Security benefits or veterans' disability compensation, pension

or survivors' benefits received from the Department of Veterans Affairs in. These taxpayers will be eligible to receive a payment of \$300 (\$600 on a joint return) if they had at least \$3,000 of qualifying income.

While detailed information is available at the IRS website www.irs.gov, all CASH Oregon / AARP Tax-Aide sites can provide assistance

WHERE TO GET HELP

For free tax preparation sites call:
2-1-1 Information & Referral, or
CASH Oregon at 503-243-7765, or
AARP Tax-Aide at 888-227-7669

SITE INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON THE WEB

WWW.CASHOREGON.ORG
WWW.AARP.ORG/MONEY/TAXAIDE

WANT TO VOLUNTEER ??

We need greeters and especially Spanish translators. Please call Sarah Broderick at
CASH Oregon at 503-243-7765
flexible hours and locations



2010 Lloyd Center Mall
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www.cashoregon.org

Jim Harper, Executive Director
Sarah Broderick, Volunteer Coordinator
Thomas Kost, Americorps*VISTA

Bill Ensign, District Coordinator
Tom Fisher, District Coordinator
Gwen Williams, State Director



SURVEY DATA FROM LLOYD CENTER

For the second year CASH Oregon is asking taxpayers to complete a short survey form at the Lloyd Center site. The selected data below is from over 1,000 completed surveys last year, and over 400 to-date this year. Other questions include home zip code, how did they learn about free tax preparation, and their interest in other financial education topics. This information will assist future outreach efforts. [Note: CASH Oregon has no access to any taxpayer's individual tax, financial or other information.]

	2008	2007		2008	2007
Asian/pacific	7%	7%	< 40	56%	51%
Black	21%	19%	40-59	33%	29%
Hispanic	32%	22%	>59	8%	9%
Native Am	2%	3%			
White	29%	34%	Head of household	28%	17%
Other/>1	6%	2%			
Used a free site last year	59%	41%	Avg adjusted gross income	\$20,750	\$19,632

ECONOMIC STIMULUS: Q & A WITH KATHY HOWELL, IRS

Kathy Howell, a tax specialist at the IRS, says the most common concern centers on who qualifies for the payments, how much they get and when.

Howell below answers a few of the most common questions about the tax rebates, which will range from \$300 for single filers to \$1,200 for a married couple filing jointly, plus \$300 per qualifying child.

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO TO GET THE PAYMENT?

You have to file a tax return.

For many individuals, this is an annual occurrence. In some cases, however, low-income workers, recipients of Social Security or certain veterans' benefits may have to file a return for the first time in many years.

They have to establish that they have at least \$3,000 of qualifying income. Qualifying income is earned income, as well as Social Security benefits, railroad retirement benefits and veterans' disability compensation, pension or survivors' benefits.

These will be the hardest people to reach. They're not used to filing, they don't understand how it works and we've been telling them for years not to file because we don't want to process their returns.

Now all of a sudden, we are telling them we want them to file. If you know someone this applies to, let them know they qualify and that they must file a return.

(Note: Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments

are not qualifying income for the rebates.)

IF I DON'T QUALIFY FOR A SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER AND HAVE AN INDIVIDUAL TAXPAYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (ITIN), CAN I STILL GET A PAYMENT?

No. You must have a Social Security number. In fact, if a spouse has an ITIN and you file a joint return, you don't qualify for the economic stimulus payment. You would have to file a separate return, which may not be to your advantage because you would pay more tax overall. In addition, if you have a child that has an ITIN, you will not get the extra payment for children.

DOES THE PAYMENT CONSTITUTE TAXABLE INCOME FOR NEXT YEAR? WHAT EFFECT WILL IT HAVE ON MY 2007 OR 2008 TAXES?

The payment will not reduce the federal tax refund you expect for 2007 or 2008. You will not owe tax on the payment. Those who file the one-time only return to receive the payment will not be required to file next year.

On your Oregon return, the payment might reduce your deduction for your federal tax liability, which could increase your state tax liability.

If a taxpayer owes federal taxes or non-tax federal debt such as student loans or child support, his economic stimulus payment will be used to pay those debts just like any other tax refund.