



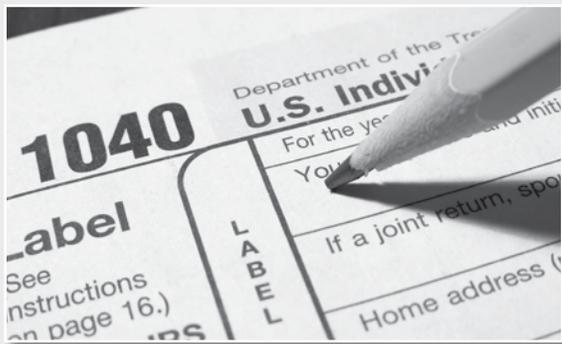
The  
Legal Aid Society  
of Cleveland  
Since 1905

# Filing Taxes Can Help Immigrants

## Immigrants should file taxes for several reasons:

- You may be eligible to get a refund.
- You may be eligible for certain tax credits, such as the Child Tax Credit, that can increase your refund.
- In the future, you may be able to amend a past return to claim additional credits, such as the Earned Income Credit, that could result in a bigger refund for your family.
- You need to have a tax return when you try to buy a house, get a bank loan, or go to college.
- Tax returns prove matters for immigration cases such as income, residence in the U.S., “good moral character,” or whether you are married.
- Filing tax returns also helps protect you and your dependents from becoming victims of identity theft.
- Anyone who works in the United States, with or without permission, is required by law to pay taxes.

**Consult with a qualified tax preparer or a tax attorney if you have questions about filing tax returns. You may be able to find free tax preparation help by calling 211.**





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## How to File Taxes without a Social Security Number – Applying for an ITIN

### What is an ITIN?

An ITIN, or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number, is a number issued by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The IRS will only issue an ITIN to people who do not have and cannot get a Social Security Number. It is used to file a tax return.

Undocumented individuals qualify to get ITIN numbers. Your spouse and children can also get ITIN numbers if they do not have social security numbers and you want to claim them on your tax return.

**An ITIN does not give you a lawful immigration status in the United States, and it does not give you permission to work in the United States. The IRS does NOT share information with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).**

### What does it cost to get an ITIN?

You do not have to pay any money to the IRS to get an ITIN. But, tax preparers may charge you to complete the application for an ITIN.

### How do I get an ITIN?

You can only get an ITIN when you are filing your taxes. You must complete IRS Form W-7 and file it with your tax return. You should seek assistance from a tax professional.

You will have to show proof of foreign status and identity. Some documents which can be used for this purpose include:

- Current passport;
- National identification card (must show photo, name, current address, date of birth, and expiration date);
- U.S. driver's license or state ID;
- Birth certificate (required for dependents under 18 years of age);
- Foreign driver's license or voter registration card;
- U.S. or foreign military ID;
- Visa;
- U.S. Citizenship Immigration Services photo ID;
- Some medical and school records;

You must provide the original documents or copies certified by the issuing agency. The document cannot be expired.

You can find more information about applying for an ITIN by visiting the IRS website at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) and searching for "ITIN" in box at the top right corner. You may also call the IRS toll-free at 1.800.829.1040 for information.

**Consult with a qualified tax preparer or a tax attorney if you have questions about filing tax returns or getting an ITIN. If you have received a tax notice from the IRS, contact Legal Aid's Low Income Taxpayer Clinic (LITC) for assistance at 1.888.817.3777.**

*Although this LITC clinic receives funding from the IRS, the clinic, its employees, and volunteers are not affiliated with the IRS. A taxpayer's decision to utilize services from an LITC clinic will not affect the taxpayer's rights before the IRS.*