



The  
Legal Aid Society  
of Cleveland  
Since 1905

# Save Money... File Taxes for Free!

## Free Tax Preparation

You can have your taxes prepared for free and get your refund within 10 days.

Find out about free tax preparation in your area:

- Call First Call for Help (dial 211 from your phone); or
- Call the IRS at 1-800-829-1040, or go to [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) to find information about Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) programs.

**Most people who file their tax return electronically with a free preparer will get their refund direct deposited into their bank account within 10 days – and it is free!** Even if you cannot open a checking account, you may be able to have your refund deposited into a savings account.

## What if I want to pay to have my taxes prepared?

### DOs

- Use a tax preparer recommended by someone you trust, who has been trained, and who will be available to answer questions for years after you file.
- Use a tax preparer who signs your tax return and includes the preparer's "PTIN" number.
- Be sure the preparer has all of your income information to prepare your tax return correctly.
- Review your return before you sign it, check everything no matter who prepares it, and ask questions about anything you don't understand.
- Obtain all copies of the forms the preparer is filing for you, even if the returns are filed electronically.

### DON'Ts

- Use a tax preparer who claims they can get you larger refunds.
- Use a tax preparer who charges a percentage of the refund. They are not allowed to do this.
- Use car dealers, furniture or jewelry stores, or payday lenders who offer to prepare your taxes and use your refund for a purchase or a cash advance; doing so will only cost you money in fees and interest.
- Sign a blank tax form.
- Fall for offers of "fast cash refunds," "express money," "instant refunds," Christmas refunds, or other refunds that are not based on your tax return or your total income information; these "refunds" are actually loans that cost you fees and interest.

**REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL OF THE INFORMATION ON YOUR TAX RETURN. MAKE SURE IT IS CORRECT.**

Special rules may apply if you have been a victim of identity theft. Be sure to tell your tax preparer if your social security number was ever used by someone else without your permission.

**If the IRS claims your return is wrong or says you didn't file, call The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland at 888-817-3777.**

Although this Low Income Taxpayer Clinic (LITC) 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.

**New Client Intake** Toll Free: 888.817.3777 • Phone: 216.687.1900

Learn more about Legal Aid and upcoming brief advice clinics: [www.lasclev.org](http://www.lasclev.org)