

Tax Return Preparation Cost Saving Tips

We want to help you control the cost of preparing your 2012 personal income tax returns. There are several factors that play into what we charge you for this work. The first is complexity and there is little that can be done to change that. The second most important element of cost is the amount of time we have to spend preparing the returns. If you have questions, don't hesitate to contact us. Some of the things that you can do to help minimize our time and your cost are:

- **Return your organizer with your tax information.** We use them internally during preparation of your returns. Please fill out the personal information section. You don't necessarily need to fill out the income and expense sections as long as you have provided the necessary documents listed below. If you don't return your copy, we have to produce another one to use and that takes time.
- **Fill out and sign the Client Organizer Questionnaire.** We cannot finish your tax returns without this being completed.
- **Copies of all tax related documents to include:**
 - All copies of your W-2s.
 - 1099-Int and 1099-Div statements.
 - Year-end combined 1099s (including 1099-B security sales forms) from stock brokers, etc. Please include **all** pages, not just the ones you think we need.
 - For any securities sold, purchase dates and costs if not on your 1099-B.
 - Records of other income such as Social Security, self-employment income, tip income, rental income, alimony, miscellaneous income or unemployment compensation.
 - Schedule K-1s from any S Corporation, Trust or Partnership. Please include all pages.
 - Copies of HSA & MSA related Forms 5498-SA & 1099-SA. If not available, copies of the year end statements.
 - Amounts contributed to or withdrawn from college savings accounts (if applicable) and a copy of your year-end statement for the account. Include a copy of the 1099-Q for withdrawals and 1098-T for expenses.
 - Summaries of your medical expenses by category (doctors, medicine, insurance, etc.). We don't need copies of all of the receipts.
 - Amount of long term care insurance paid (if applicable) and for whom it was paid.
 - Copies of your vehicle registrations for auto excise tax purposes.
 - 1098 mortgage interest statements.
 - Receipts for your cash charitable contributions. If you have numerous ones, please provide a summary.
 - If you had non-cash charitable contributions of over \$500 in total, we need receipts that include the organization name and address, date of the contribution, description of the items donated, approximate original cost of the donated items, how you acquired the original items (purchase, gift, etc.), fair market value of the donated items (the receipt should list this) and how you valued the donated items (thrift shop value, etc.). For automobile and other high value items, there are special rules and we will deal with those when we prepare your returns.
 - Name, address, SSN/EIN and amount paid to each day care provider (if applicable).
 - If you bought or sold a house or refinanced your mortgage, we need copies of the closing statements (HUD-1).
 - All year-end investment account statements for retirement and non-retirement accounts.
 - Receipts related to energy efficient improvements (does not include appliances).
 - A complete listing of your estimated tax payments to include date, amount and to whom paid.
 - Complete copies of any correspondence from any taxing authority.
 - If you are a new client, provide a copy of your prior year federal and state tax returns. If you self-prepared the returns using TurboTax software, provided a copy of the data file. Contact us if you are unsure of how to do this.