

NEWS

Pat Quinn, Governor

Michelle R. B. Saddler, Secretary



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Governor Quinn Urges Working Families to Take Advantage of Free Tax Preparation

Nearly 30 sites offering free tax services across Chicago, suburbs

SPRINGFIELD, Illinois – As the tax season gets into full swing, Governor Pat Quinn, the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) and the Illinois Department of Revenue (IDOR) are urging eligible Illinois families to take advantage of tax preparation assistance supported by the state.

"We want to ensure Illinois families achieve the maximum savings on their taxes," IDHS Secretary Michelle R.B. Saddler said. "For many households, these benefits are critical to rising out of poverty and making the transition from dependency to self-sufficiency."

To help working families achieve the maximum savings on their taxes, IDHS partners with the Center for Economic Progress to provide free tax preparation assistance at a dozen tax assistance centers. The services are provided free of charge to families making less than \$50,000 annually and to individuals with yearly incomes under \$25,000. IDHS also funds the Tax Assistance Program (TAP) which has nearly 20 locations in Chicago and the suburbs. So far this tax season, more than 9,500 taxpayers have filed returns through both programs, collecting nearly \$21 million in refunds.

The state is also encouraging Illinois taxpayers to apply for the newly expanded Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). Governor Quinn fought for and signed legislation in 2012 that doubles the state EITC gradually until it reaches 10 percent of the federal credit. That is expected to save working families an extra \$105 million a year.

"This year's average Illinois refund for families filing for EIC is about \$200," IDOR Director Brian Hamer said. "Many taxpayers don't realize they are eligible for this important benefit, so getting help in preparing tax returns can mean a big refund check. We're off to a good start this year with more than 450,000 families receiving earned income credits of \$93 million."

For more information on the Tax Counseling Project, contact the Center for Economic Progress in Chicago at 312-630-0273, or call the toll-free statewide number at 888-827-8511. For information on the Tax Assistance Program call 312-409-1555 or 312-409-4318 (Spanish). Details are also available on the IDHS website at www.dhs.state.il.us and the IDOR website at www.tax.illinois.gov.

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