

2009 Tax Appointment Worksheet

	Event	Documents or Information Needed
1	Married, divorced, or separated in 2009	Married – prior year return of both spouses Divorced – copy of the divorce decree Separated – copy of the separate maintenance agreement
2	Birth or adoption	Social Security cards and adoption papers
3	Death of child or spouse	Date of death –
4	Additional members of household	Date of occupancy and relationship –
5	Job change	Start date – Name of new employer –W-2s from new and old employers
6	Unemployment	Unemployment Form
7	Retirement contribution	Type of plan – Amount of contribution –
8	Retirement distributions	Form 1099-R
9	Social Security benefits	Form 1099-SSA
10	Sale of stocks, bonds, etc.	Form 1099-B or other sale documents; basis or original costs
11	Purchase of stocks, bonds, etc., personal residence, or other real estate	Purchase documents; closing papers
12	Inheritance	Will; K-1 from the estate
13	Trade any property	Date of trade, property given up and property received, basis and FMV; qualified intermediary sales agreements or closing papers
14	Start or end a small business	Formation or termination dates; Property contributions or distributions
15	Lawsuit settlements	Date received; reason for the settlement; 1099-MISC
16	Rental property	Income; expenses; new property purchased
17	Prizes	Form 1099-MISC; value of prizes not included on Form 1099-MISC
18	Lottery or gambling winnings	Total amount won whether on W-2G or not; total amount of losses`
19	Health insurance, medical, dental, or drug expenses	Health insurance premiums; post-taxed payments; totals of other medical, dental, and drug expenses. If the health insurance is pre-taxed (ie. cafeteria plan, Sec. 125, POP), premiums have already been deducted from the wage. Medical miles (24 cents per mile) Total miles driven –
20	State taxes income, property taxes paid, sales tax paid on vehicles, motorcycles, or homes	Prior year's income tax return; property tax bills; closing papers from the purchase or sale of property; letter from the state regarding any change in a prior filed return
21	Purchase or refinance a home; first-time homebuyer prior to 12/1/09	Closing papers from purchase; Forms 1098
22	Charitable contributions of money, property, or out-of-pocket expenses	Date and type of contributions, knowledge that receipts from the organizations have been received; mileage log for charitable work.
	Charitable miles (14 cents per mile)	Total miles driven –
	Transfer of IRA to charity	Brokerage statement showing transfer.
23	Job-related expenses	Meals, lodging, and miscellaneous expense amounts for items related to employment
	Business miles	(55 cents per mile) Total miles driven, business miles driven per vehicle –
24	Educational or student loan interest expenses	Form 1098-T for parents or children; interest record for student loans; if the child is a student, the form will come to the child.
25	Child or disabled spouse care	The name, address, and ID number of the day care provider; the amount paid to the provider; if the provider comes into your home, a W-2 may be required.
26	Energy credit	Information regarding the purchase of qualifying vehicle, windows, doors, furnace, solar, or other energy upgrades
27	Bankruptcy filing	Date filed –
28	Debt forgiveness or abandonment of property	Form 1099-A for abandonment Form 1099-C for cancellation

Are you owed money by the United States Treasury?

The United States Treasury is looking for people who never received their tax refunds, who hold old unredeemed savings bonds, and especially for people who purchased War Bonds during WWII. The war bonds matured in 1985, and millions of them were never cashed.

Before the federal government seizes these bonds, put in your social security number (and those of your parents or grandparents) to see if you are the owner of one of these bonds!

Simply click the link below, and scroll down for the blue "Start Search" button:

https://www.treasurydirect.gov/indiv/tools/tools_treasuryhunt.htm



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Annual Tax Newsletter

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE FILING YOUR 2009 TAXES

“When you don’t fully understand tax laws, you may pay too much or risk an audit!”

Every year brings new and revised tax regulations, including deductions and credits to which you may be entitled. Unless you’re a professional tax practitioner, how can you be sure you’re receiving maximum benefit and fairness from the U.S. Tax Code? Depending on your personal situation, you could benefit from professional expertise.

EAs...

- advise, represent, and prepare tax returns for individuals, partnerships, corporations, estates, trusts and other entities;
- have strenuous requirements, both to obtain enrollment and to maintain the license through stringent, comprehensive tax education;
- are respected as “*The Tax Professionals*”!

BIG CHANGES IN 2009 FOR INDIVIDUALS COURTESY OF THE AMERICAN RECOVERY & REINVESTMENT ACT

Your tax professional, a proud Member of the California Society of Enrolled Agents, is sending this to you as notification of several key tax changes this year resulting from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

Many of the Act’s provisions are temporary and apply only to 2009 (or in some cases 2009 and 2010).

Here are just a few of the changes you’ll need to know about when filing your taxes.

Stimulus Payment: In past years, stimulus payments were issued directly to individuals; this year, the “New Making Work Pay” credit (up to \$400 for individuals or \$800 for joint filers) is reflected in your withholding. Your employer should have made the correction and you should be bringing home a little more of your pay. The Making Work Pay credit is reduced for those who received the \$250 check for Social Security recipients. Several other caveats apply, and if you have multiple jobs you need to consider adjusting your withholding accordingly. If you’re self-employed, you can receive the credit by reducing your estimated tax payments. In either case, your tax professional can help.

First-Time Homebuyer Credit: If you are a qualified first-time homebuyer, you could be eligible for a refundable tax credit equal to 10% of the purchase price or \$8,000, whichever is less. The Credit applies to purchases made through November 30, 2009. “First-time homebuyer” doesn’t mean you couldn’t have previously owned a home; your Enrolled Agent can help determine if you qualify.

Sales Tax Deduction for Vehicle Purchase: If you purchase a new car, light truck, motorcycle, or even a motor home between February 16, 2009 and January 1, 2010, you could be eligible for a deduction of the tax up to \$49,500 of the purchase price of a qualifying vehicle. The deduction is phased out for when adjusted gross income (AGI) thresholds are reached. The vehicle sales tax can be added to the standard deduction or claimed on

Schedule A, and may be claimed in addition to the state and local income tax. Your EA can explain.

Education Credits & Deductions: The Act has created a new “American Opportunity” credit of up to \$2,500 of the cost of tuition and related expenses paid during the tax year for qualifying higher education; this credit applies to both 2009 and 2010. Again, the credit is phased out for higher-income taxpayers based on AGI. See your EA for specific details.

Alternative Minimum Tax Relief: The infamous AMT was created to ensure that the wealthy pay their share of taxes, but over the years its nefarious grip has spread to many middle-class taxpayers as well. The “alternative” part of the tax calls on taxpayers to figure their taxes two ways, and pay the AMT if the amount is greater than that owed under regular tax requirements. This year, the Act increased exemption amounts and now allows nonrefundable credits to offset AMT (as they offset regular taxes).

Tax Breaks for the Unemployed. Unemployment compensation benefits are usually taxable; in 2009, however, an individual doesn’t pay tax on the first \$2,400 of unemployment benefits received for the year. The Act also includes a subsidy for COBRA and other health-care premiums for terminated employees and their families.

Other Credits, Deductions: The Act also creates or makes key changes to other credits, including the Earned Income Credit (EIC), the refundable child credit, and “green” credits for employee-provided transit/carpooling benefits and use of alternative energy, plus a credit of up to \$1,500 for energy efficient home improvements.

Your Enrolled Agent can assist you in ensuring that you do not pay too much and help you minimize your risk of an audit. EAs are federally-licensed tax professionals who are required to demonstrate and maintain a high level of expertise in tax planning, preparation, and representation. **Members of the California Society of Enrolled Agents are required to fulfill 20% more education than required by the IRS, and to adhere to a strict code of ethics.**

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