

FACT SHEET

Prisoner Re-entry Tax Education Program



Key Points

What it is?

Get Right with Your Taxes – an educational package – information that individuals need to know about their tax responsibilities.

Who can use it?

- Prison Officials
- Halfway Houses
- Community Organizations

Who benefits from the information in this package?

As taxpayers, everyone can benefit from this information. While it is geared to a specific “prisoner” population, the content is on tax compliance and could be used for other outreach opportunities.

How to request copies of the Get Right with Your Taxes Educational Package?

- 800-TAX-FORM
- irs.gov/formspubs/index.html
- partner@irs.gov
- Relationship Managers

Why Use It?

Re-entry presents a major opportunity to educate and improve tax compliance.

Prisoner Statistics *

- 95% will be released back to the community
- >700,000 annual releases from state and federal prisons
- >9 Million cycle through local jails each year

* Source- Federal Interagency Re-entry Council

Background

Nationwide

The Administration has made prisoner re-entry a priority. At the national level, federal agencies are working together to identify and address barriers that impact access to resources necessary for successful transition of offenders back to their communities. Additionally, they are working with federal, state, and local correctional systems to implement educational programs for returning offenders pertaining to these areas.

IRS Service-wide

The IRS formed a service-wide team as a result of the IRS Prisoner Tax Compliance Summit held in August 2010. The overall mission of this team is to achieve increased prisoner tax compliance, reduce erroneous refunds and increase effectiveness for the management of prisoner tax returns. The Prisoner Tax Compliance Strategic Plan has five focus areas: Data Exchange, Compliance, Outreach, MOU Initiative and Legislative. The IRS Prisoner Outreach Initiative Team was established as an IRS team to address one of the focus areas.

Outreach

Stakeholder Partnerships, Education and Communication (SPEC), is charged with leading the Outreach Team. The goal of this team is to educate prisoners on their filing responsibilities upon re-entry. The team recognized the needs of this population, identified opportunities for tax education, and created a plan for delivery.

Opportunity Statement

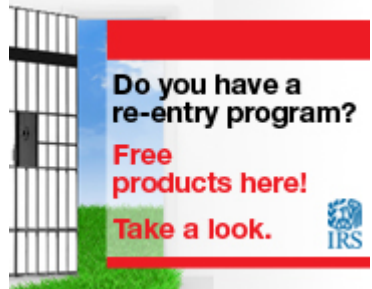
SPEC is taking a progressive approach by extending outreach to prisoners in an effort to improve prisoner tax compliance. SPEC will leverage the collaborations formed through the Attorney General’s Federal Re-entry Council Interagency Working Group and the Federal Offender Re-entry Group (FORGe) to reach out to the various entities involved in providing educational opportunities for returning offenders within the criminal justice system to deliver this program. The stand-alone lesson is intended to be a part of the nationwide re-entry educational and training programs targeting offenders prior to release.

The network of partners consists of: Department of Justice – Federal Bureau of Prisons, Bureau of Justice Assistance, National Institute of Corrections; Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts – Office of Probation and Pretrial Services, Federal Judicial Center; Department of Education; Department of Labor; Department of Veterans Affairs; Department of Housing and Urban Development; Department of Health and Human Services; Department of the Treasury - Internal Revenue Service; American Correctional Association; Department of Agriculture; Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; Social Security Administration; Office of Management and Budget; White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships; Legal Action Center/National HIRE Network, and more.

Next Steps

The SPEC organization conducted two successful pilot programs using materials and educational products to address basic tax filing and tax compliance issues that directly affected this target population. As a result of the programs, SPEC created the Get Right with Your Taxes Educational Program to be used by prison officials engaged in re-entry preparation. The Outreach Team will leverage partner networks formed from these collaborations to ensure that local, state, and federal correctional facilities include these stand-alone educational products as an additional topic for their re-entry preparation. A facilitator does not need to have a tax law background to present this re-entry tax education program.

Get Right with Your Taxes Educational Program

| Publication | Intended Use/Audience | Ordering Guidelines |
|---|--|--|
| Publication 4931 (DVD) - Get Right With Your Taxes DVD English Version Spanish Version | Intended for viewing at each session, geared to the target prisoner audience | Order one copy per correctional facility |
| Publication 4924 - Get Right With Your Taxes Facilitator's Guide English Version Spanish Version | Provides detailed instructions to anyone administering the outreach sessions | Order one copy per facilitator |
| Publication 4925 Get Right With Your Taxes Life Cycle Brochure English Version Spanish Version | Written for the target prisoner audience. Contains helpful resources and tax information | Order one copy for each audience member/re-entry program participant |
|  | Intended for partners to post on their websites for easy access to the products | Electronic Version Only |

Please take a look at these products found on www.irs.gov, use Key Word Search: *Prisoner Re-entry Program, prisoner or parolees*. Above, is a sample of an online Public Service Announcement that can be posted to partner websites for easy access to the new IRS tax education resources. You may access these online announcements directly at <http://www.marketingexpress.irs.gov/mexpress/ads/>.

The availability of these products has been announced via email to the partners' networks. Partners and networks can freely share the email with others to ensure that all correctional officials conducting the re-entry training programs have access to the electronic versions of the products. It will be the responsibility of the correctional officials to view or order the products through the toll free number **800-Tax-Form – (800-829-3676)**, <http://www.irs.gov/formspubs/index.html>, the partner@irs.gov email address (with subject line – Get right with your taxes) or their **local SPEC relationship manager**.

The SPEC Team will monitor the program implementation and make adjustments as required. The team will also develop a longer-term strategy for expanding the program to other prisons and related facilities as needed.