



Oregon

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Free tax help to help Salem residents boost tax refunds

(Salem, Ore.) In recognition of national Earned Income Tax Credit day, the North Mall Office Building will host a visit from One Economy Corporation's "My Free Taxes" van, in partnership with Salem-Keizer Community Development Corporation (SKCDC), on Friday, January 27 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Thousands of Oregonians might overlook a special federal tax credit because they don't know about it. As a result, they could miss up to \$5,751 in extra federal income tax credits through the Earned Income Tax Credit, or EITC. The average eligible Oregonian saw their refund boosted by \$1,941 by the credit in 2011.

"This money can make a real difference to workers struggling in this recovering economy," said Chuck Fisher, executive director of SKCDC.

Anyone earning \$57,000 or less from wages, self-employment or farming in 2011 should see if they qualify. Eligible workers must file federal income tax returns (even if they are not required to file) and claim the credit in order to receive it.

According to the IRS, many people will qualify for the first time this year due to economic changes in their income or changes in their marital or parental statuses. The agency estimates four out of five eligible workers currently claim their EITC.

"We want to raise that to five out of five," said Fisher. "They earned it. Now they need to file, claim it and get it."

Individuals can get free help determining their EITC eligibility and claiming the credit at the North Mall Office Building, 725 Summer St NE, Salem. Help will be available from IRS trained volunteers on January 27 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Workers can get free help determining their EITC eligibility and claiming the credit. Many communities have volunteer income tax assistance sites. Residents can locate a site by calling their community's 211 number for local services or the IRS at 1-800-906-9887.

To help preparers accurately determine EITC eligibility and prepare returns, individuals should bring:

- Photo proof of identification
- Social Security cards for themselves, their spouse and all dependents or Social Security number verification letters issued by the Social Security Administration
- Birth dates for all persons listed on the tax return
- Wage and earning statement(s) Forms W-2, W-2G, and 1099-R, from all employers
- Interest and dividend statements from banks (Forms 1099)
- Copies of their prior year federal and state returns, if available
- Bank routing and account numbers for direct deposit of their refunds
- Other relevant information about income and expenses
- Amounts paid for day care, if applicable, and the day care provider's identifying number.

Both spouses must be present to sign joint returns. Anyone paid to prepare federal income tax returns is required by law to sign the return and enter their Preparer Tax Identification Number.

“EITC is a financial boost for working people in a recovering economy and allows more funds to flow within your community. It's money that can make lives a little easier,” said John Russell, SKCDC Board Secretary.

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Editors please note: A fact sheet on the EITC program is available [here](#).

Chuck Fisher, Executive Director of Salem-Keizer Community Development will be available for comment during the event.