News Release

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Oregonians can get a larger tax refund with the Earned Income Tax Credit

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Friday, January 27 is Earned Income Tax Credit Awareness Day, (EITC) a nationwide effort to increase awareness of the tax credit and free tax preparation options. People are encouraged to visit the IRS' website today to learn more about the credit and eligibility requirements.

Oregon has one the lowest EITC participation rates in the country, with only 74.4 percent of eligible taxpayers claiming the credit in 2013, according to the IRS. The Oregon Department of Human Services and the Oregon Department of Revenue are working with other state agencies and community partners to encourage taxpayers to learn more about this credit and find out if they're eligible.

The EITC can mean a refund of up to $6,269 if the person filing has qualifying children. In 2015, the average EITC refund for Oregon taxpayers was $2,136.

To be eligible, taxpayers must have earned income last year and have a valid Social Security number (SSN). Other eligibility requirements for filers include:

- They can't use the "married filing separate" filing status.
- Children they're claiming on their return can't be the qualifying child of another person.
- They must be a U.S. citizen or resident alien for the entire year (in most cases).

Taxpayers can use the IRS' EITC Assistant to further check their eligibility.

Those who qualify for the EITC can also claim Oregon's Earned Income Credit (EIC), which is eight percent of the taxpayer's federal credit. There also are other federal tax credits that workers may be eligible for, including the American Opportunity Tax Credit, the Child Tax Credit, and the Additional Child Tax Credit.

Those who need help determining if they're eligible for certain tax credits or need assistance with filing their federal or Oregon return have some free or low-cost options. Some companies offer free tax preparation software and e-filing for eligible taxpayers. To see these offers, visit www.oregon.gov/dor and search for "free tax preparation."

AARP and CASH Oregon provide free or low-cost, in-person tax preparation services throughout Oregon. To see their locations, visit www.aarp.org or www.cashoregon.org. People can also call 211 to find free tax return preparation sites.

For more information on the EITC, visit www.irs.gov. For questions about Oregon taxes, call the Department of Revenue at 503-378-4988. For questions about the Department of Human Services call, 503-945-5600.

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