



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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COUNTY OFFERS TAX ASSISTANCE TO FAMILIES ***Services Available Countywide until Mid-April***

With about four weeks left until the tax filing deadline, the County Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) is reminding families and individuals that free tax assistance is available to help them claim their Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).

Low-income families and individuals can have their taxes prepared, at no cost, at more than 70 locations throughout the region. The tax assistance will be provided countywide until mid-April. People should call 2-1-1 to make an appointment.

“The County and its many partners are making it easier for people to claim and keep their hard-earned money,” said San Diego County Board of Supervisors Chairman Bill Horn. “Getting access to these IRS funds is simple. All you have to do is file an income tax return.”

The services are part of the annual EITC campaign, which helps San Diego County families and individuals take advantage of the EITC and reduces the amount of money that goes unclaimed each year. Locally, about \$77 million go unclaimed each year.

Established in 1975, the EITC is the federal government’s largest cash assistance program designed to lift low-income families and individuals out of poverty by helping them keep more of their hard-earned wages.

In 2003, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors launched a pilot program that provided free tax preparation to low-income workers. The program was expanded countywide the following year.

Last year, the County established a partnership with several higher education institutions so that college students screen tax filers—at several tax preparation sites—to determine if they qualify for CalFresh, formerly known as food stamps.

“The EITC program is a great opportunity for low-income families and individuals to supplement their income,” said Nick Macchione, HHS Director. “The screening for CalFresh eligibility is an important component because it helps families determine if they qualify for the benefit which could allow them to buy more healthy and nutritious foods.”

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