

# Free Tax Help for Military Personnel

If you, or your spouse, are a member of the military, you may be eligible to receive free assistance with the preparation and filing of your federal tax return. The U.S. Armed Forces participate in the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program. The Armed Forces Tax Council oversees the operation of the military tax programs worldwide, and serves as the main conduit for outreach by the IRS to military personnel and their families. The AFTC consists of tax program coordinators for the Marine Corps, Air Force, Army, Navy and Coast Guard.

Military-based VITA sites provide free tax advice, tax preparation, return filing and other tax assistance to military members and their families. The volunteer assistants are trained to address military-specific tax issues, such as combat zone tax benefits.

Military commanders support the program by detailing members of the military to prepare returns and by providing space and equipment for tax centers. The IRS supports these efforts by providing tax software and training.

To receive this free assistance, you should bring the following records to your military VITA site:

- Valid photo identification
- Social Security cards for you, your spouse and dependents or a social security number verification letter issued by the Social Security Administration
- Birth dates for you, your spouse and dependents
- Current year's tax package, if you received one
- Wage and earning statement(s) -Form W-2, W-2G, 1099-R
- Interest and dividend statements (Forms 1099)
- A copy of last year's federal and state tax returns, if available
- Bank routing numbers and account numbers for direct deposit
- Total amount paid for day care
- Day care provider's identifying number
- Other relevant information about income and expenses

If your filing status is Married Filing Jointly and you wish to file your tax return electronically, both you and your spouse should be present to sign the required forms. If it isn't possible for both to be present, a valid power of attorney that allows tax preparation can be used to sign and file the return.

For more information, review IRS Publication 3, Armed Forces' Tax Guide, available on the IRS Web site at [IRS.gov](http://IRS.gov) or order a free copy by calling 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676).