

PRESS RELEASE

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Free Tax Preparation Service Available to Rhode Islanders

Through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program led by United Way, eligible taxpayers can have their federal and state income tax returns completed and filed for free

Providence, R.I. (January 27, 2022) — With the 2022 tax filing season having officially begun on January 24, United Way of Rhode Island wants to remind Rhode Islanders they may be [eligible](#) to have their federal and state income taxes prepared and filed for free.

The effort is the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, which has been led locally by United Way since 2005. Through VITA, individuals and families who earn \$57,414 or less annually and meet program [criteria](#) can access no-cost tax services that help ensure they receive the money they're due in tax refunds and credits. There are [25 VITA sites across the state](#) offered at community-based organizations from Woonsocket to Westerly, and all are staffed by IRS-trained and certified volunteers.

Rhode Islanders are encouraged to call 211 for information about site locations, making an appointment, eligibility, and more. VITA sites offer services in English and Spanish, with volunteers especially knowledgeable in the important Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Tax Credit (CTC), which lessen tax burden and can lead to a larger refund.

“VITA is a difference-making program that returns the hard-earned money of Rhode Islanders back into their pockets and into our local economy,” says Zoya Tseytlin, United Way’s program officer for workforce development and economic mobility. “Especially during these times, an influx of funds can move a household from the brink of crisis to being stable — if you think you may be eligible, please call 211.”

Once an appointment is made, those seeking services at a VITA program site must bring the following: Social Security card(s) for self, spouse, and dependents; valid photo ID for self and spouse (if applicable); all 2020 W-2, 1099, and 1095-A forms; copy of 2020 federal tax return if available; child and dependent care expenses and Tax Identification Number (SSN or EIN) of care provider; and proof of health insurance. Additionally, where applicable, taxpayers should provide Letter 6419 (Advance Child Tax Credits) and Notice 1444-C (Third Economic Payment).

For direct deposit, a checking or savings account number with routing number is needed.

On Friday, January 28, advocates across the country — including here in the Ocean State — will recognize [EITC Awareness Day](#). The day is a national effort that highlights the tax credits millions of workers earn and deserve at a time most are preparing to file their returns. According to the IRS, four out of five eligible taxpayers claim and receive the EITC, which, when combined with the CTC, lifted an estimated 9 million people out of poverty last year.

In 2021, local VITA volunteers filed more than 19,000 tax returns that returned more than \$20 million to Rhode Islanders in the form of tax credits and tax refunds.

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United Way of Rhode Island is uniting our community and resources to build racial equity and opportunities for all Rhode Islanders. A member of the world's largest nonprofit network, we bring together individuals, businesses, nonprofits, community leaders, and government to tackle the root causes of inequity and achieve specific, measurable goals. Our programs include 211, the statewide front door connecting Rhode Islanders with social services, resources, and vital programs. Both directly and through grants to nonprofits, we are investing to build economic opportunity, advance childhood learning, expand philanthropy, and drive policy and participation. To learn more, visit unitedwayri.org, or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), or [Twitter](#).