



IRS Special Edition Tax Tip 2016-04: Time Running Out to Claim \$950 Million in Refunds for 2012 Tax Returns

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IRS Tax Tips

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Time Running Out to Claim \$950 Million in Refunds for 2012 Tax Returns

If you did not file a tax return for 2012, you may be one of nearly one million taxpayers who may be due a refund from that year. If you are, you must claim your share of almost \$950 million by April 18. To claim your refund, you must file a 2012 federal income tax return. Here are the facts you need to know about unclaimed refunds:

- The unclaimed refunds apply to people who did not file a federal income tax return for 2012. The IRS estimates that half the potential refunds are more than \$718.
- Some people, such as students and part-time workers, may not have filed because they had too little income to require filing a tax return. They may have a refund waiting if they had taxes withheld from their wages or made quarterly estimated payments. A refund could also apply if they qualify for certain tax credits, such as the Earned Income Tax Credit.
- If you didn't file a 2012 return, the law generally provides a three-year window to claim a refund

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from that year. For 2012 returns, the window closes on April 18, 2016 (or April 19 for taxpayers in Maine and Massachusetts).

- The law requires that you properly address, mail and postmark your tax return by that date to claim your refund.
- If you don't file a claim for a refund within three years, the money becomes the property of the U.S. Treasury. There is no penalty for filing a late return if you are due a refund.
- The IRS may hold your 2012 refund if you have not filed tax returns for 2013 and 2014. The U.S. Treasury will apply the refund to any federal or state tax you owe. It also may use your refund to offset unpaid child support or past due federal debts, such as student loans.
- If you're missing Forms W-2, 1098, 1099 or 5498 for prior years, you should ask for copies from your employer, bank or other payer. If you can't get copies, [get a free transcript by mail](#) that provides the information you need by going to IRS.gov. You can also file [Form 4506-T](#) to get a transcript. Order your transcript early. Transcripts arrive in five to 10 calendar days at the address we have on file for you.

Current and prior year [tax forms and instructions](#) are available on IRS.gov or by calling 800-TAX-FORM (800-829-3676).

Each and every taxpayer has a set of fundamental rights they should be aware of when dealing with the IRS. These are your [Taxpayer Bill of Rights](#). Explore your rights and our obligations to protect them on IRS.gov.

Additional IRS Resources:

- [IRS Has Refunds Totaling \\$950 Million for People Who Have Not Filed a 2012 Federal Income Tax Return](#)

IRS YouTube Videos:

- *Amending My Return* – [English](#) | [Spanish](#) | [ASL](#)

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