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Internal Revenue Service

Publication 972

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Child Tax Credit

For use in preparing

2012 Returns



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Future Developments

For the latest information about developments related to Publication 972, such as legislation enacted after it was published, go to www.irs.gov/pub972.

What's New

Form 8812. Form 8812 is no longer available to figure the additional child tax credit. Instead, use Parts II through IV of Schedule 8812 (Form 1040A or 1040) to figure the additional child tax credit for 2012.

Schedule 8812. Schedule 8812 (Form 1040A or 1040) is new for 2012. It includes a Part I to be completed by taxpayers claiming a child tax credit for a child identified by an IRS Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) instead of a social security number (SSN). See *Qualifying Child*, later. Parts II through IV of Schedule 8812 are used to figure the additional child tax credit for 2012.

Reminder

Photographs of missing children. The Internal Revenue Service is a proud partner with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Photographs of missing children selected by the Center may appear in this publication on pages that would otherwise be blank. You can help bring these children home by looking at the photographs and calling 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678) if you recognize a child.

Introduction

The purpose of this publication is:

1. To figure the child tax credit you claim on Form 1040, line 51; Form 1040A, line 33; or Form 1040NR, line 48; and
2. To figure the amount of earned income you enter on line 4a of Schedule 8812 (Form 1040A or 1040), Child Tax Credit.

This publication is intended primarily for individuals sent here by the instructions to Forms 1040, 1040A, or 1040NR, or Schedule 8812. Even if you were not sent here by the instructions to one of the forms or the schedule, you can still choose to use this publication to figure your credit. However, most individuals can use a simpler worksheet in their tax form instructions.

If you were sent here from your Form 1040, Form 1040A, or Form 1040NR instructions. Complete the [Child Tax Credit Worksheet](#), later in this publication.

If you were sent here from your Schedule 8812 instructions. Complete the [1040 and 1040NR Filers — Earned Income Worksheet](#), later in this publication.

If you have not read your Form 1040, Form 1040A, or Form 1040NR instructions. Read the explanation of who must use this publication next. If you find that you are not required to use this publication to figure your child tax credit, you can use the simpler worksheet in the Form

1040, Form 1040A, or Form 1040NR instructions to figure your credit.

Who must use this publication. If you answer “Yes” to either of the following questions, you must use this publication to figure your child tax credit.

1. Are you excluding income from Puerto Rico or filing any of the following forms?
 - a. Form 2555 or 2555-EZ (relating to foreign earned income).
 - b. Form 4563 (exclusion of income for residents of American Samoa).
2. Are you claiming any of the following credits?
 - a. Mortgage interest credit, Form 8396.
 - b. Adoption credit, Form 8839.
 - c. Residential energy efficient property credit, Form 5695, Part I.
 - d. District of Columbia first-time homebuyer credit, Form 8859.

Comments and suggestions. We welcome your comments about this publication and your suggestions for future editions.

You can write to us at the following address:

Internal Revenue Service
Individual and Specialty Forms and Publications
Branch
SE:W:CAR:MP:T:I
1111 Constitution Ave. NW, IR-6526
Washington, DC 20224

We respond to many letters by telephone. Therefore, it would be helpful if you would include your daytime phone number, including the area code, in your correspondence.

You can email us at taxforms@irs.gov. Please put “Publications Comment” on the subject line. You can also send us comments from www.irs.gov/formspubs/. Select “Comment on Tax Forms and Publications” under “More Information.”

Although we cannot respond individually to each comment received, we do appreciate your feedback and will consider your comments as we revise our tax products.

Ordering forms and publications. Visit www.irs.gov/formspubs/ to download forms and publications, call 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676), or write to the address below and receive a response within 10 days after your request is received.

Internal Revenue Service
1201 N. Mitsubishi Motorway
Bloomington, IL 61705-6613

Tax questions. If you have a tax question, check the information available on IRS.gov or call 1-800-829-1040. We cannot answer tax questions sent to either of the above addresses.

Child Tax Credit

This credit is for people who have a [qualifying child](#) as defined later. It is in addition to the credit for child and dependent care expenses (on Form 1040, line 48; Form 1040A, line 29; or Form 1040NR, line 46) and the earned income credit (on Form 1040, line 64a; or Form 1040A, line 38a).

The maximum amount you can claim for the credit is \$1,000 for each qualifying child.

Qualifying Child

A qualifying child for purposes of the child tax credit is a child who:

1. Is your son, daughter, stepchild, foster child, brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister, or a descendant of any of them (for example, your grandchild, niece, or nephew),
2. Was under age 17 at the end of 2012,
3. Did not provide over half of his or her own support for 2012,
4. Lived with you for more than half of 2012 (see [Exemptions to time lived with you](#) below),
5. Is claimed as a dependent on your return,
6. Does not file a joint return for the year (or files it only as a claim for refund), and
7. Was a U.S. citizen, a U.S. national, or a U.S. resident alien. For more information, see Publication 519, U.S. Tax Guide for Aliens. If the child was adopted, see [Adopted child](#) below.

For each qualifying child, you must either check the box on Form 1040 or Form 1040A, line 6c, column (4); or Form 1040NR, line 7c, column (4).

Example. Your 10-year-old nephew lives in Mexico and qualifies as your dependent. Because he is not a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or U.S. resident alien, he is not a qualifying child for the child tax credit.

Filers who have certain child dependents with an IRS Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN). If you are claiming a child tax credit or additional child tax credit for a child identified on your tax return with an ITIN instead of a social security number (SSN) or adoption taxpayer identification number (ATIN), you must complete Part I of Schedule 8812 (Form 1040A or 1040).

Although a child may be your dependent, you may only claim a child tax credit or additional child tax credit for a dependent who is a citizen, national, or resident of the United States. To be treated as a resident of the United States, a child generally will need to meet the requirements of the substantial presence test. For more information about the substantial presence test, see Publication 519, U.S. Tax Guide for Aliens.

Adopted child. An adopted child is always treated as your own child. An adopted child includes a child lawfully placed with you for legal adoption.

If you are a U.S. citizen or U.S. national and your adopted child lived with you all year as a member of your

household in 2012, that child meets condition (7) above to be a qualifying child for the child tax credit.

Exceptions to time lived with you. A child is considered to have lived with you for more than half of 2012 if the child was born or died in 2012 and your home was this child's home for more than half the time he or she was alive. Temporary absences by you or the child for special circumstances, such as school, vacation, business, medical care, military service, or detention in a juvenile facility, count as time the child lived with you.

There are also exceptions for kidnapped children and children of divorced or separated parents. For details, see the instructions for line 6c in either the Form 1040 or Form 1040A instructions.

Qualifying child of more than one person. A special rule applies if your qualifying child is the qualifying child of more than one person. For details, see the instructions for line 6c in either the Form 1040 or Form 1040A instructions.

Limits on the Credit

You must reduce your child tax credit if either (1) or (2) applies.

1. The amount on Form 1040, line 46; Form 1040A, line 28; or Form 1040NR, line 44, is less than the credit. If this amount is zero, you cannot take this credit because there is no tax to reduce. But you may be able to take the additional child tax credit. See [Additional Child Tax Credit](#), later.
2. Your modified adjusted gross income (AGI) is above the amount shown below for your filing status.
 - a. Married filing jointly – \$110,000.
 - b. Single, head of household, or qualifying widow(er) – \$75,000.
 - c. Married filing separately – \$55,000.

Modified AGI. For purposes of the child tax credit, your modified AGI is your AGI plus the following amounts that may apply to you.

- Any amount excluded from income because of the exclusion of income from Puerto Rico. On the dotted line next to Form 1040, line 38, enter the amount excluded and identify it as "EPRI." Also attach a copy of any Form(s) 499R-2/W-2PR to your return.
- Any amount on line 45 or line 50 of Form 2555, Foreign Earned Income.
- Any amount on line 18 of Form 2555-EZ, Foreign Earned Income Exclusion.
- Any amount on line 15 of Form 4563, Exclusion of Income for Bona Fide Residents of American Samoa.

If you do not have any of the above, your modified AGI is the same as your AGI.

AGI. Your AGI is the amount on Form 1040, line 38; Form 1040A, line 22; or Form 1040NR, line 37.

Claiming the Credit

To claim the child tax credit, you must file Form 1040, Form 1040A, or Form 1040NR. You cannot claim the child

tax credit on Form 1040EZ or Form 1040NR-EZ. You must provide the name and identification number (usually a social security number) on your tax return for each qualifying child.

Earned Income

You will need to figure your earned income using one of the worksheets that appear later in this publication if you are completing the [Line 11 Worksheet](#), later, or Schedule 8812. Form 1040 or Form 1040NR filers, use the [1040 and 1040NR Filers — Earned Income Worksheet](#), later, to figure your earned income. Form 1040A filers, use the [1040A Filers — Earned Income Worksheet](#), later.

For this purpose, earned income includes only:

- Taxable earned income, and
- Nontaxable combat pay.

Additional Child Tax Credit

This credit is for certain individuals who get less than the full amount of the child tax credit. The additional child tax credit may give you a refund even if you do not owe any tax.

How to claim the additional child tax credit. To claim the additional child tax credit, follow the steps below.

1. Make sure you figured the amount, if any, of your child tax credit.
2. If you answered "Yes" on line 9 or line 10 of the Child Tax Credit Worksheet in the Form 1040, Form 1040A, or Form 1040NR instructions (or on line 13 of the Child Tax Credit Worksheet in this publication), use Parts II through IV of Schedule 8812 to see if you can take the additional child tax credit.
3. If you have an additional child tax credit on line 13 of Schedule 8812, carry it to Form 1040, line 65; Form 1040A, line 39; or Form 1040NR, line 63.

Paperwork Reduction Act Notice. We ask for the information on the worksheets in this publication to carry out the Internal Revenue laws of the United States. You are required to give us the information if requested. We need it to ensure that you are complying with these laws and to allow us to figure and collect the right amount of tax.

You are not required to provide the information requested on a form (or worksheet in this publication) that is subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act unless the form (or publication) displays a valid OMB control number. Books or records relating to a form, its instructions, or this publication must be retained as long as their contents may become material in the administration of any Internal Revenue law. Generally, tax returns and return information are confidential, as required by section 6103.

The average time and expenses required to complete these worksheets will vary depending on individual circumstances. For the estimated averages, see the instructions for your income tax return.

If you have suggestions for making these worksheets simpler, we would be happy to hear from you. See [Comments and suggestions](#), earlier.

Child Tax Credit Worksheet

Before you begin: ✓ Figure the amount of any credits you are claiming on Form 5695, Part II; Form 8834, Part I; Form 8910; Form 8936; or Schedule R.



• To be a qualifying child for the child tax credit, the child must be **under age 17** at the end of 2012 and meet the other requirements listed earlier, under Qualifying Child.

• If you do not have a qualifying child, you cannot claim the child tax credit.

Part 1

1. Number of qualifying children: _____ × \$1,000. Enter the result. 1

2. Enter the amount from Form 1040, line 38; Form 1040A, line 22; or Form 1040NR, line 37. 2

3. **1040 Filers.** Enter the total of any—
 • Exclusion of income from Puerto Rico, and
 • Amounts from Form 2555, lines 45 and 50; Form 2555-EZ, line 18; and Form 4563, line 15. } 3
1040A and 1040NR Filers. Enter -0-.

4. Add lines 2 and 3. Enter the total. 4

5. Enter the amount shown below for your filing status.
 • Married filing jointly - \$110,000
 • Single, head of household, or qualifying widow(er) - \$75,000
 • Married filing separately - \$55,000 } 5

6. Is the amount on line 4 more than the amount on line 5?
 No. Leave line 6 blank. Enter -0- on line 7.
 Yes. Subtract line 5 from line 4. 6
 If the result is not a multiple of \$1,000, increase it to the next multiple of \$1,000.
 For example, increase \$425 to \$1,000, increase \$1,025 to \$2,000, etc.

7. Multiply the amount on line 6 by 5% (.05). Enter the result. 7

8. Is the amount on line 1 more than the amount on line 7?
 No. You cannot take the child tax credit on Form 1040, line 51; Form 1040A, line 33; or Form 1040NR, line 48. You also cannot take the additional child tax credit on Form 1040, line 65; Form 1040A, line 39; or Form 1040NR, line 63. Complete the rest of your Form 1040, Form 1040A, or Form 1040NR.
 Yes. Subtract line 7 from line 1. Enter the result. 8
Go to Part 2 on the next page.

Child Tax Credit Worksheet—Continued

Part 2

9. Enter the amount from Form 1040, line 46; Form 1040A, line 28; or Form 1040NR, line 44.

9	
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10. Add the following amounts from:

Form 1040 or Form 1040A or Form 1040NR

Line 47	Line 45	+	
Line 48	Line 29	Line 46	+	
Line 49	Line 31	+	
Line 50	Line 32	Line 47	+	
Form 5695 , line 32			+	
Form 8834 , line 23			+	
Form 8910 , line 22			+	
Form 8936 , line 23			+	
Schedule R , line 22			+	

Enter the total.

10	
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11. Are you claiming any of the following credits?

- Mortgage interest credit, Form 8396.
- Adoption credit, Form 8839.
- Residential energy efficient property credit, Form 5695, Part I.
- District of Columbia first-time homebuyer credit, Form 8859.

No. Enter the amount from line 10.

Yes. Complete the Line 11 Worksheet, later, to figure the amount to enter here.

11	
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12. Subtract line 11 from line 9. Enter the result.

12	
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13. Is the amount on line 8 of this worksheet more than the amount on line 12?

No. Enter the amount from line 8.

Yes. Enter the amount from line 12. See the **TIP** below.

This is your child tax credit.

13	
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Enter this amount on
 Form 1040, line 51;
 Form 1040A, line 33;
 or Form 1040NR, line 48.



You may be able to take the **additional child tax credit** on Form 1040, line 65; Form 1040A, line 39; or Form 1040NR, line 63, only if you answered “Yes” on line 13.

- First, complete your Form 1040 through line 64a (also complete line 69), Form 1040A through line 38a, or Form 1040NR through line 62 (also complete line 65).
- Then, use Parts II through IV of Schedule 8812 to figure any additional child tax credit.

Line 11 Worksheet

Before you begin: ✓ Complete the Earned Income Worksheet, later, that applies to you.



Use this worksheet only if you answered “Yes” on line 11 of the Child Tax Credit Worksheet earlier.

1. Enter the amount from line 8 of the Child Tax Credit Worksheet.	1	
2. Enter your earned income from the Earned Income Worksheet that applies to you.	2	
3. Is the amount on line 2 more than \$3,000? <input type="checkbox"/> No. Leave line 3 blank, enter -0- on line 4, and go to line 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes. Subtract \$3,000 from the amount on line 2. Enter the result.	3	
4. Multiply the amount on line 3 by 15% (.15) and enter the result.	4	
5. Is the amount on line 1 of the Child Tax Credit Worksheet \$3,000 or more? <input type="checkbox"/> No. If line 4 above is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero, enter the amount from line 1 above on line 12 of this worksheet. Do not complete the rest of this worksheet. Instead, go back to the Child Tax Credit Worksheet and do the following. Enter the amount from line 10 on line 11, and complete lines 12 and 13. • More than zero, leave lines 6 through 9 blank, enter -0- on line 10, and go to line 11. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes. If line 4 above is equal to or more than line 1 above, leave lines 6 through 9 blank, enter -0- on line 10, and go to line 11. Otherwise, see <i>1040 filers</i> , <i>1040A filers</i> , and <i>1040NR filers</i> at the end of this worksheet and then go to line 6.		
6. Enter the total of the following amounts from Form(s) W-2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social security taxes from box 4, and • Medicare taxes from box 6. Railroad employees, see the end of this worksheet.	6	
7. 1040 filers. Enter the total of any— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amounts from Form 1040, lines 27 and 57, and • Any taxes that you identified using code “UT” and entered on line 60. 1040A filers. Enter -0-. 1040NR filers. Enter the total of any— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amounts from Form 1040NR, lines 27 and 55, and • Any taxes that you identified using code “UT” and entered on line 59. 	7	
8. Add lines 6 and 7. Enter the total.	8	
9. 1040 filers. Enter the total of the amounts from Form 1040, lines 64a and 69. 1040A filers. Enter the total of any— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount from Form 1040A, line 38a, and • Excess social security and tier 1 RRTA taxes withheld that you entered to the left of Form 1040A, line 41. 1040NR filers. Enter the amount from Form 1040NR, line 65.	9	

If married filing jointly, include your spouse’s amounts with yours when completing lines 6 and 7.

Line 11 Worksheet—Continued

10. Subtract line 9 from line 8. If the result is zero or less, enter -0-. 10

11. Enter the **larger** of line 4 or line 10. 11

12. Is the amount on line 11 of this worksheet more than the amount on line 1?
 No. Subtract line 11 from line 1. Enter the result.
 Yes. Enter -0-. 12

Next, figure the amount of any of the following credits that you are claiming.

- Mortgage interest credit, Form 8396.
- Adoption credit, Form 8839.
- Residential energy efficient property credit, Form 5695, Part I.
- District of Columbia first-time homebuyer credit, Form 8859.

Then, go to line 13.

13. Enter the total of the amounts from—

- Form 8396, line 9, and
- Form 8839, line 12, and
- Form 5695, line 17, and
- Form 8859, line 9.

13

14. Enter the amount from line 10 of the Child Tax Credit Worksheet. 14

15. Add lines 13 and 14. Enter the total. 15

*Enter this amount on
line 11 of the Child
Tax Credit Worksheet.*

1040 filers. Complete lines 57, 64a, and 69 of your return if they apply to you.

1040A filers. Complete line 38a of your return if it applies to you. If you, or your spouse if filing jointly, had more than one employer for 2012 and total wages of over \$110,100, figure any excess social security and railroad retirement (RRTA) taxes withheld. See the instructions for Form 1040A, line 41.

1040NR filers. Complete lines 55 and 65 of your return if they apply to you.

Railroad employees. Include the following taxes in the total on line 6 of the Line 11 Worksheet.

- ✓ Tier 1 tax withheld from your pay.
This tax should be shown in box 14 of your Form(s) W-2 and identified as “Tier 1 tax.”
- ✓ If you were an employee representative, 50% of the total Tier 1 tax and Tier 1 Medicare tax you paid for 2012.



Before you begin:

- ✓ Use this worksheet only if you were sent here from the Line 11 Worksheet earlier in this publication or line 4a of Schedule 8812, Child Tax Credit.
- ✓ Disregard community property laws when figuring the amounts to enter on this worksheet.
- ✓ If married filing jointly, include your spouse's amounts with yours when completing this worksheet.

1.	<p>a. Enter the amount from Form 1040, line 7, or Form 1040NR, line 8</p> <p>b. Enter the amount of any nontaxable combat pay received. Also enter this amount on Schedule 8812, line 4b. This amount should be shown in Form(s) W-2, box 12, with code Q.</p> <p>Next, if you are filing Schedule C, C-EZ, F, or SE, or you received a Schedule K-1 (Form 1065 or Form 1065-B), go to line 2a. Otherwise, skip lines 2a through 2e and go to line 3.</p>	<p>1a. _____</p> <p>1b. _____</p>
2.	<p>a. Enter any statutory employee income reported on line 1 of Schedule C or C-EZ</p> <p>b. Enter any net profit or (loss) from Schedule C, line 31; Schedule C-EZ, line 3; Schedule K-1 (Form 1065), box 14, code A (other than farming); and Schedule K-1 (Form 1065-B), box 9, code J1.* Reduce any Schedule K-1 amounts as described in the instructions for completing Schedule SE in the Partner's Instructions for Schedule K-1. Do not include on this line any statutory employee income or any other amounts exempt from self-employment tax. Options and commodities dealers must add any gain or subtract any loss (in the normal course of dealing in or trading section 1256 contracts) from section 1256 contracts or related property</p> <p>c. Enter any net farm profit or (loss) from Schedule F, line 34, and from farm partnerships, Schedule K-1 (Form 1065), box 14, code A.* Reduce any Schedule K-1 amounts as described in the instructions for completing Schedule SE in the Partner's Instructions for Schedule K-1. Do not include on this line any amounts exempt from self-employment tax</p> <p>d. If you used the farm optional method to figure net earnings from self-employment, enter the amount from Schedule SE, Section B, line 15. Otherwise, skip this line and enter on line 2e the amount from line 2c</p> <p>e. If line 2c is a profit, enter the smaller of line 2c or line 2d. If line 2c is a (loss), enter the (loss) from line 2c.</p>	<p>2a. _____</p> <p>2b. _____</p> <p>2c. _____</p> <p>2d. _____</p> <p>2e. _____</p>
3.	<p>Combine lines 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, and 2e. If zero or less, stop. Do not complete the rest of this worksheet. Instead, enter -0- on line 2 of the Line 11 Worksheet or line 4a of Schedule 8812, whichever applies</p>	<p>3. _____</p>
4.	<p>Enter any amount included on line 1a that is:</p> <p>a. A scholarship or fellowship grant not reported on Form W-2</p> <p>b. For work done while an inmate in a penal institution (enter "PRI" and this amount on the dotted line next to line 7 of Form 1040 or line 8 of Form 1040NR)</p> <p>c. A pension or annuity from a nonqualified deferred compensation plan or a nongovernmental section 457 plan (enter "DFC" and this amount on the dotted line next to line 7 of Form 1040 or line 8 of Form 1040NR). This amount may be shown in box 11 of your Form W-2. If you received such an amount but box 11 is blank, contact your employer for the amount received as a pension or annuity.</p>	<p>4a. _____</p> <p>4b. _____</p> <p>4c. _____</p>
5.	<p>a. Enter any amount included on line 3 that is also included on Form 2555, line 43, or Form 2555-EZ, line 18. Do not include any amount that is also included on line 4a, 4b, or 4c above</p> <p>b. Enter the portion, if any, of the amount from Form 2555, line 44 that you also included on Schedule E in partnership net income or (loss) or deducted on Form 1040, line 27, or Form 1040NR, line 27; Schedule C; Schedule C-EZ; or Schedule F.</p> <p>c. Subtract line 5b from line 5a</p>	<p>5a. _____</p> <p>5b. _____</p> <p>5c. _____</p>
6.	<p>Enter the amount from Form 1040, line 27, or Form 1040NR, line 27</p>	<p>6. _____</p>
7.	<p>Add lines 4a through 4c, 5c, and 6</p>	<p>7. _____</p>
8.	<p>Subtract line 7 from line 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you were sent here from the Line 11 Worksheet, enter this amount on line 2 of that worksheet. • If you were sent here from Schedule 8812, enter this amount on line 4a of that form. 	<p>8. _____</p>

**If you have any Schedule K-1 amounts and you are not required to file Schedule SE, complete the appropriate line(s) of Schedule SE, Section A. Put your name and social security number on Schedule SE and attach it to your return.*



Before you begin:

- ✓ Use this worksheet only if you were sent here from the Line 11 Worksheet earlier in this publication.
- ✓ Disregard community property laws when figuring the amounts to enter on this worksheet.

1. a. Enter the amount from Form 1040A, line 7	1a.	
b. Enter the amount of any nontaxable combat pay received. Also enter this amount on Schedule 8812, line 4b. This amount should be shown in Form(s) W-2, box 12, with code Q.	1b.	
c. Add lines 1a and 1b.	1c.	
2. Enter any amount included on line 1a that is:		
a. A scholarship or fellowship grant not reported on Form W-2	2a.	
b. For work done while an inmate in a penal institution (enter "PRI" and this amount next to line 7 of Form 1040A)	2b.	
c. A pension or annuity from a nonqualified deferred compensation plan or a nongovernmental section 457 plan (enter "DFC" and this amount next to line 7 of Form 1040A). This amount may be shown in box 11 of your Form W-2. If you received such an amount but box 11 is blank, contact your employer for the amount received as a pension or annuity	2c.	
3. Add lines 2a through 2c	3.	
4. Subtract line 3 from line 1c. Enter the result here and on line 2 of the Line 11 Worksheet	4.	

How To Get Tax Help

You can get help with unresolved tax issues, order free publications and forms, ask tax questions, and get information from the IRS in several ways. By selecting the method that is best for you, you will have quick and easy access to tax help.

Free help with your tax return. Free help in preparing your return is available nationwide from IRS-certified volunteers. The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program is designed to help low-moderate income, elderly, disabled, and limited English proficient taxpayers. The Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) program is designed to assist taxpayers age 60 and older with their tax returns. Most VITA and TCE sites offer free electronic filing and all volunteers will let you know about credits and deductions you may be entitled to claim. Some VITA and TCE sites provide taxpayers the opportunity to prepare their return with the assistance of an IRS-certified volunteer. To find the nearest VITA or TCE site, visit IRS.gov or call 1-800-906-9887 or 1-800-829-1040.

As part of the TCE program, AARP offers the Tax-Aide counseling program. To find the nearest AARP Tax-Aide site, visit AARP's website at www.aarp.org/money/taxaide or call 1-888-227-7669.

For more information on these programs, go to IRS.gov and enter "VITA" in the search box.



Internet. You can access the IRS website at IRS.gov 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to:

- *E-file* your return. Find out about commercial tax preparation and *e-file* services available free to eligible taxpayers.
- Check the status of your 2012 refund. Go to IRS.gov and click on *Where's My Refund*. Information about your return will generally be available within 24 hours

after the IRS receives your e-filed return, or 4 weeks after you mail your paper return. If you filed Form 8379 with your return, wait 14 weeks (11 weeks if you filed electronically). Have your 2012 tax return handy so you can provide your social security number, your filing status, and the exact whole dollar amount of your refund.

- *Where's My Refund?* has a new look this year! The tool will include a tracker that displays progress through three stages: (1) return received, (2) refund approved, and (3) refund sent. *Where's My Refund?* will provide an actual personalized refund date as soon as the IRS processes your tax return and approves your refund. So in a change from previous filing seasons, you won't get an estimated refund date right away. *Where's My Refund?* includes information for the most recent return filed in the current year and does not include information about amended returns.
- You can obtain a free transcript online at IRS.gov by clicking on *Order a Return or Account Transcript* under "Tools." For a transcript by phone, call 1-800-908-9946 and follow the prompts in the recorded message. You will be prompted to provide your SSN or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN), date of birth, street address and ZIP code.
- Download forms, including talking tax forms, instructions, and publications.
- Order IRS products.
- Research your tax questions.
- Search publications by topic or keyword.
- Use the Internal Revenue Code, regulations, or other official guidance.
- View Internal Revenue Bulletins (IRBs) published in the last few years.

- Figure your withholding allowances using the IRS Withholding Calculator at www.irs.gov/individuals.
- Determine if Form 6251 (Alternative Minimum Tax—Individuals), must be filed by using our Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) Assistant available at IRS.gov by typing *Alternative Minimum Tax Assistant* in the search box.
- Sign up to receive local and national tax news by email.
- Get information on starting and operating a small business.



Phone. Many services are available by phone.

- **Ordering forms, instructions, and publications.** Call 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676) to order current-year forms, instructions, and publications, and prior-year forms and instructions (limited to 5 years). You should receive your order within 10 days.
- **Asking tax questions.** Call the IRS with your tax questions at 1-800-829-1040.
- **Solving problems.** You can get face-to-face help solving tax problems most business days in IRS Taxpayer Assistance Centers (TAC). An employee can explain IRS letters, request adjustments to your account, or help you set up a payment plan. Call your local Taxpayer Assistance Center for an appointment. To find the number, go to www.irs.gov/localcontacts or look in the phone book under *United States Government, Internal Revenue Service*.
- **TTY/TDD equipment.** If you have access to TTY/TDD equipment, call 1-800-829-4059 to ask tax questions or to order forms and publications. The TTY/TDD telephone number is for individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability. These individuals can also access the IRS through relay services such as the Federal Relay Service at www.gsa.gov/fedrelay.
- **TeleTax topics.** Call 1-800-829-4477 to listen to pre-recorded messages covering various tax topics.
- **Checking the status of your 2012 refund.** To check the status of your 2012 refund, call 1-800-829-1954 or 1-800-829-4477 (automated *Where's My Refund?* information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week). Information about your return will generally be available within 24 hours after the IRS receives your e-filed return, or 4 weeks after you mail your paper return. If you filed Form 8379 with your return, wait 14 weeks (11 weeks if you filed electronically). Have your 2012 tax return handy so you can provide your social security number, your filing status, and the exact whole dollar amount of your refund. *Where's My Refund?* will provide an actual personalized refund date as soon as the IRS processes your tax return and approves your refund. *Where's My Refund?* includes information for the most recent return filed in the current year and does not include information about amended returns.

Evaluating the quality of our telephone services. To ensure IRS representatives give accurate, courteous, and professional answers, we use several methods to evaluate the quality of our telephone services. One method is for a second IRS representative to listen in on or record

random telephone calls. Another is to ask some callers to complete a short survey at the end of the call.



Walk-in. Some products and services are available on a walk-in basis.

- **Products.** You can walk in to some post offices, libraries, and IRS offices to pick up certain forms, instructions, and publications. Some IRS offices, libraries, and city and county government offices have a collection of products available to photocopy from reproducible proofs. Also, some IRS offices and libraries have the Internal Revenue Code, regulations, Internal Revenue Bulletins, and Cumulative Bulletins available for research purposes.
- **Services.** You can walk in to your local TAC most business days for personal, face-to-face tax help. An employee can explain IRS letters, request adjustments to your tax account, or help you set up a payment plan. If you need to resolve a tax problem, have questions about how the tax law applies to your individual tax return, or you are more comfortable talking with someone in person, visit your local TAC where you can talk with an IRS representative face-to-face. No appointment is necessary—just walk in. Before visiting, check www.irs.gov/localcontacts for hours of operation and services provided. If you have an ongoing, complex tax account problem or a special need, such as a disability, an appointment can be requested by calling your local TAC. You can leave a message and a representative will call you back within 2 business days. All other issues will be handled without an appointment. To call your local TAC, go to www.irs.gov/localcontacts or look in the phone book under *United States Government, Internal Revenue Service*.



Mail. You can send your order for forms, instructions, and publications to the address below. You should receive a response within 10 days after your request is received.

Internal Revenue Service
1201 N. Mitsubishi Motorway
Bloomington, IL 61705-6613

Taxpayer Advocate Service. The Taxpayer Advocate Service (TAS) is your voice at the IRS. Its job is to ensure that every taxpayer is treated fairly, and that you know and understand your rights. TAS offers free help to guide you through the often-confusing process of resolving tax problems that you haven't been able to solve on your own. Remember, the worst thing you can do is nothing at all.

TAS can help if you can't resolve your problem with the IRS and:

- Your problem is causing financial difficulties for you, your family, or your business.
- You face (or your business is facing) an immediate threat of adverse action.
- You have tried repeatedly to contact the IRS but no one has responded, or the IRS has not responded to you by the date promised.

If you qualify for help, they will do everything they can to get your problem resolved. You will be assigned to one advocate who will be with you at every turn. TAS has

offices in every state, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Although TAS is independent within the IRS, their advocates know how to work with the IRS to get your problems resolved. And its services are always free.

As a taxpayer, you have rights that the IRS must abide by in its dealings with you. The TAS tax toolkit at www.TaxpayerAdvocate.irs.gov can help you understand these rights.

If you think TAS might be able to help you, call your local advocate, whose number is in your phone book and on our website at www.irs.gov/advocate. You can also call the toll-free number at 1-877-777-4778. Deaf and hard of hearing individuals who have access to TTY/TDD equipment can call 1-800-829-4059. These individuals can also access the IRS through relay services such as the Federal Relay Service at www.gsa.gov/fedrelay.

TAS also handles large-scale or systemic problems that affect many taxpayers. If you know of one of these broad issues, please report it through the Systemic Advocacy Management System at www.irs.gov/advocate.

Low Income Taxpayer Clinics (LITCs). Low Income Taxpayer Clinics (LITCs) are independent from the IRS. Some clinics serve individuals whose income is below a certain level and who need to resolve a tax problem. These clinics provide professional representation before the IRS or in court on audits, appeals, tax collection disputes, and other issues for free or for a small fee. Some clinics can provide information about taxpayer rights and responsibilities in many different languages for individuals who speak English as a second language. For more information and to find a clinic near you, see the LITC page on www.irs.gov/advocate or IRS Publication 4134, *Low Income Taxpayer Clinic List*. This publication is also available by calling 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676) or at your local IRS office.

Free tax services. Publication 910, *IRS Guide to Free Tax Services*, is your guide to IRS services and resources. Learn about free tax information from the IRS, including publications, services, and education and assistance programs. The publication also has an index of over 100

TeleTax topics (recorded tax information) you can listen to on the telephone. The majority of the information and services listed in this publication are available to you free of charge. If there is a fee associated with a resource or service, it is listed in the publication.

Accessible versions of IRS published products are available on request in a variety of alternative formats for people with disabilities.



DVD for tax products. You can order Publication 1796, *IRS Tax Products DVD*, and obtain:

- Current-year forms, instructions, and publications.
- Prior-year forms, instructions, and publications.
- Tax Map: an electronic research tool and finding aid.
- Tax law frequently asked questions.
- Tax Topics from the IRS telephone response system.
- Internal Revenue Code—Title 26 of the U.S. Code.
- Links to other Internet-based tax research materials.
- Fill-in, print, and save features for most tax forms.
- Internal Revenue Bulletins.
- Toll-free and email technical support.
- Two releases during the year.
 - The first release will ship the beginning of January 2013.
 - The final release will ship the beginning of March 2013.

Purchase the DVD from National Technical Information Service (NTIS) at www.irs.gov/cdorders for \$30 (no handling fee) or call 1-877-233-6767 toll free to buy the DVD for \$30 (plus a \$6 handling fee).

Index



To help us develop a more useful index, please let us know if you have ideas for index entries. See “Comments and Suggestions” in the “Introduction” for the ways you can reach us.

<p>A Additional Child Tax Credit: How to claim the additional child tax credit 3</p> <p>Assistance (See Tax help)</p> <hr/> <p>C Child Tax Credit: Qualifying child 2</p> <p>Claiming the Credit 3</p> <hr/> <p>E Earned Income 3</p> <hr/> <p>F Free tax services 9</p>	<p>H Help (See Tax help)</p> <hr/> <p>L Limits on the Credit: AGI 3 Modified AGI 3</p> <hr/> <p>M More information (See Tax help)</p> <hr/> <p>P Publications (See Tax help)</p>	<p>Q Qualifying Child: Adopted child 2 Exceptions to time lived with you 2 Qualifying child of more than one person 2</p> <hr/> <p>T Tax help 9 Taxpayer Advocate 10 TTY/TDD information 9</p>
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