



TAS Awareness Video

Video Interviewees

Carmen Codarmaz: Secretary
Karen Sheely: Local Taxpayer Advocate, Indiana
Lori Mings: Local Taxpayer Advocate, Kansas City Campus
Donaldo Smith: Communications Specialist

What is the Taxpayer Advocate Service?

Carmen Codarmaz: Buenos días. Estoy con la oficina del servicio abogado del contribuyente.
Translation: "Good day. I'm with the Taxpayer Advocate Service, and we're here to help you."

Karen Sheely: The Taxpayer Advocate Service is your friend at the IRS.

Lori Mings: TAS is an organization that was set up by Congress to operate inside the IRS, on behalf of taxpayers.

Donaldo Smith: We are specifically devoted to helping those taxpayers that need assistance that just can't get their problems solved through regular channels.

Carmen Codarmaz: Si tienes problemas con los impuestos, nos puedes hablar con nosotros.
Translation: "If you're having tax problems, you can come to us."

Donaldo Smith: Our services are free.

Lori Mings: When taxpayers come to us, we are concerned about their individual problem, but in addition to that, we take on the bigger issues. Even if a taxpayer does not come to us, if there's legislation that's going to have a negative impact on taxpayers or it's going to cause burdens for taxpayers, then we take those on as well.

Karen Sheely: I think the best thing that the Taxpayer Advocate office offers is one-on-one service to individuals.

Carmen Codarmaz: You call in and from the moment that you're assigned a case advocate, they're with you until the very end.

Karen Sheely: You've got their phone number. You have a toll-free line for them. You've got their fax number and they will be there not only until your particular issue is resolved, but any related issues.

Lori Mings: We are the only contact that that taxpayer has to make when they're trying to get that issue resolved.

How do I qualify for TAS services?

Donaldo Smith: We have criteria and basically if the IRS is not getting back to you within the timeframes that they told you they would get back to you, then that does meet the criteria to come and be assisted by the Taxpayer Advocate Service.

Karen Sheely: We work individual cases, business cases, hardship cases, Congressional cases.

Donaldo Smith: If you are threatened with a major hardship or it's going to cost you a significant amount of money that you feel to represent yourself in dealing with the IRS, then you do qualify for our services.

Making an Impact

Karen Sheely: We have good success stories all the time.

Lori Mings: A taxpayer came in and they were unable to continue to make payments and when we looked at that, we found that their debt had been paid already and that the IRS was continuing to levy their bank accounts and take monies every month. We pulled a report and found that there were probably 250 taxpayers on this report. So we just brought all of those taxpayers into our program and worked their cases and then issued refunds for all the amounts that they had overpaid, beyond what their tax debt was. And that's very rewarding.

Karen Sheely: I think the other case that was really exceptional was after the Oklahoma City bombing. People who had

lost a parent, there was a credit that was available to them that required the filing of a return and there were 15 dependents that could not be located. One of the dependents ended up being a college student, and through local contacts, we tracked him down. And we're able to find out that not only he, but also his sister, were entitled to these claims. And on the very last day where you could get this claim filed, we got those claims in and they each received \$10,000.

Carmen Codarmaz: That's what makes the job so interesting, too, that the people in our office are willing to go out of their way to help and assist anybody that they can.

How can I get help from TAS?

Karen Sheely: Every state has a taxpayer advocate.

Lori Mings: All the local offices' phone numbers are listed in the blue pages of the phone book. If they're working with a practitioner, the practitioner can fax in information to us. They fill out a form 911 or they can just call.

Donaldo Smith: That toll-free number is 1-877-ASK-TAS1.

Carmen Codarmaz: Para aprender mas de la oficina de nosotros, puedes llamar a 1-877-275-8271.
Translation: "To learn more about our office, you can call 1-877-275-8271."