

TREASURY INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR TAX ADMINISTRATION



Interim Results of the 2024 Filing Season

April 30, 2024

Report Number: 2024-408-024

This report has cleared the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration disclosure review process and information determined to be restricted from public release has been redacted from this document.

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Why TIGTA Did This Audit

This audit was initiated to provide selected information related to the IRS's 2024 Filing Season. The overall objective of this review was to evaluate whether the IRS timely and accurately processed individual paper and electronically filed (e-filed) tax returns during the 2024 Filing Season.

Impact on Tax Administration

The annual tax return filing season is a critical time for the IRS because this is when most individuals file their income tax returns and contact the IRS if they have questions about specific tax laws or filing procedures.

The IRS began processing Tax Year 2023 individual tax returns on January 29, 2024. During Calendar Year 2024, the IRS expects to receive 167.1 million individual income tax returns. The total e-file volume is projected to increase by 3.7 million (2.4 percent) in Calendar Year 2024.

In addition, the IRS's fraud detection processes continue to prevent the issuance of a significant amount of fraudulent refunds.

Fraud Detection



\$272.7

Million claimed in fraudulent refunds.



96.3%

Fraudulent refunds prevented.

What TIGTA Found

As of March 2, 2024, the IRS received more than 54 million tax returns, of which 52.8 million (97.7 percent) were e-filed. The IRS also issued refunds totaling \$115.5 billion. In addition, as of this same date, the IRS received more than 1.1 million Free File returns, which is a 14 percent increase as of the same period during the 2023 Filing Season.

TIGTA's review of the IRS's business rules determined that 44 of the 56 rules are accurately rejecting tax returns or were intentionally disabled. Two business rules were incorrectly rejecting tax returns, and 10 business rules had either low or no rejections. As such, TIGTA will continue to monitor them throughout the remainder of the filing season. TIGTA's review of the accepted e-filed tax returns identified no concerns that tax returns with the conditions described in the 56 business rules were accepted erroneously for processing.

The IRS continues to increase the number of fraudulent tax returns detected and stopped from entering the tax processing system, *i.e.*, rejecting e-filed tax returns and preventing paper tax returns from posting. In addition, as of February 24, 2024, the IRS reported that it identified 32,616 tax returns with approximately \$272.7 million claimed in fraudulent refunds and prevented the issuance of \$262.7 million (96.3 percent) of those refunds.

In addition, the IRS provides assistance to millions of taxpayers via its website (IRS.gov), telephone, and social media platforms as well as face-to-face assistance at its Taxpayer Assistance Centers, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance sites, and Tax Counseling for the Elderly sites. Finally, the IRS offers taxpayers the ability to obtain information using their mobile devices. For example, the IRS uses common social media platforms to share the latest information on tax changes, scam alerts, initiatives, and products and services.

As of March 2, 2024, taxpayers made 18.4 million total attempts to contact the IRS by calling the various customer service toll-free telephone assistance lines. The IRS reports that 4.1 million calls were answered with automation, and telephone assistants answered nearly 4.3 million calls and provided a 91 percent Level of Service with a 2-minute Average Speed of Answer. The Level of Access, which TIGTA previously developed because the IRS's Level of Service measure did not reflect overall call demand, was 51.2 percent.

What TIGTA Recommended

This report was prepared to provide interim information only. Therefore, no recommendations were made in this report.



TREASURY INSPECTOR GENERAL
FOR TAX ADMINISTRATION

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20024

April 30, 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR: COMMISSIONER OF INTERNAL REVENUE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Weir", is positioned above the typed name.

FROM: Matthew A. Weir
Acting Deputy Inspector General for Audit

SUBJECT: Final Audit Report – Interim Results of the 2024 Filing Season
(Audit No.: 2024408023)

This report presents the results of our review to evaluate whether the Internal Revenue Service timely and accurately processed individual paper and electronically filed tax returns during the 2024 Filing Season. This review is part of our Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Audit Plan and addresses the major management and performance challenges of *Tax Law Changes*, *Managing IRA Transformation Efforts*, and *Taxpayer Service*.

This report was prepared to provide information only. Therefore, we made no recommendations in the report. However, we provided Internal Revenue Service management officials with an advance copy of this report for review and comment prior to issuance.

If you have any questions, please contact me or Diana M. Tengesdal, Assistant Inspector General for Audit (Returns Processing and Account Services).

Table of Contents

[Background](#).....Page 1

[Results of Review](#).....Page 3

Processing Tax Returns

[Individual Tax Return Receipts and Number of Refunds Issued Decreased Slightly From the 2023 Filing Season](#).....Page 3

Detecting and Preventing Tax Refund Fraud

[Fraud Detection Processes Continue to Prevent and Detect the Issuance of Millions of Dollars in Fraudulent Refunds](#).....Page 7

Providing Customer Service

[IRS Customer Service Initiatives](#).....Page 9

Appendices

[Appendix I – Detailed Objective, Scope, and Methodology](#).....Page 15

[Appendix II – Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration Audits of Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 Tax Law Changes](#).....Page 17

[Appendix III – Electronic Filing Business Rules](#).....Page 18

[Appendix IV – Tax Return Errors Resolved Using the FixERS Tool](#).....Page 23

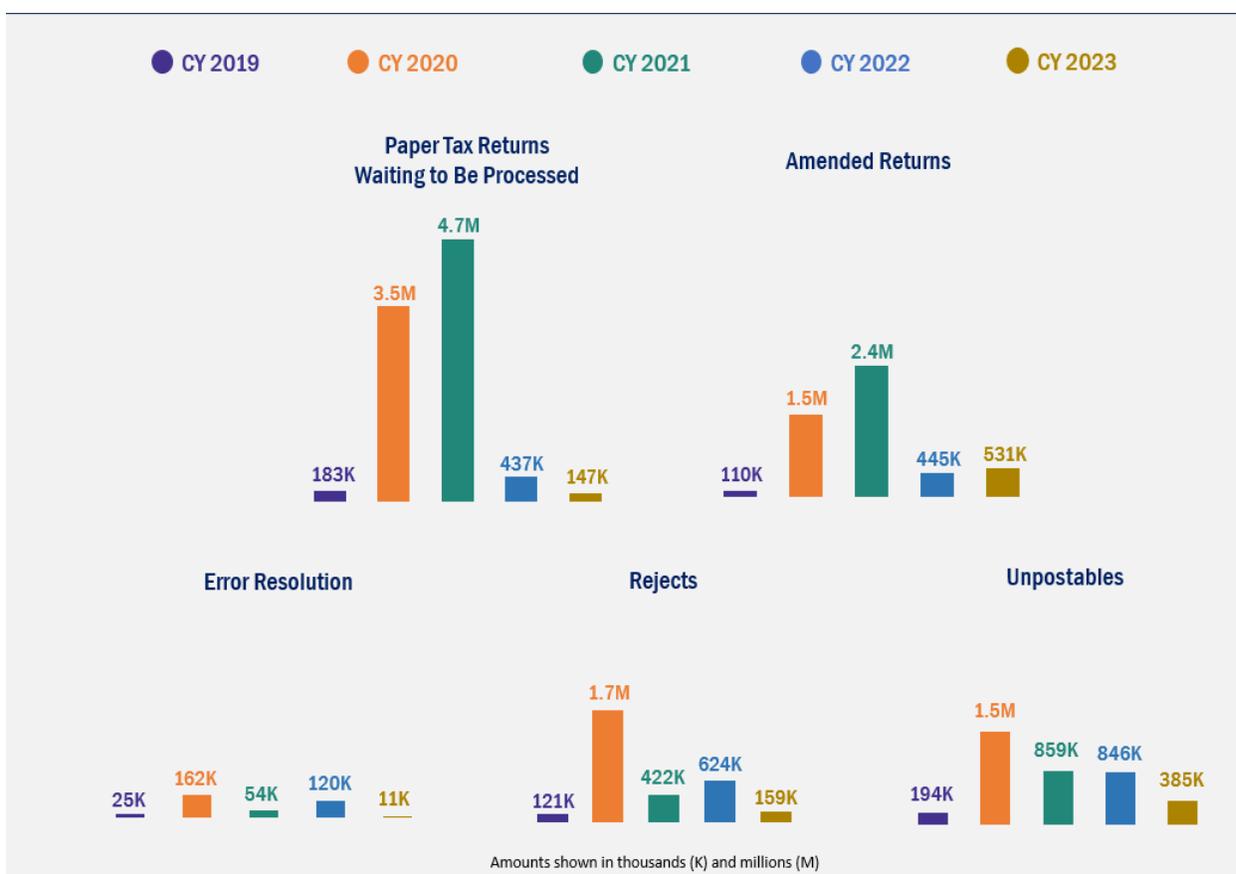
[Appendix V – Glossary of Terms](#).....Page 26

[Appendix VI – Abbreviations](#).....Page 29

Background

The annual tax return filing season is a critical time for the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) because it is when most individuals file their income tax returns and contact the IRS if they have questions about specific tax laws or filing procedures.¹ While the IRS has reduced most inventories at or near pre-Pandemic levels, the unpostable and amended tax return inventories remain at higher levels. Figure 1 provides a comparison of individual tax return inventory levels in various stages of processing that the IRS normally carried into the subsequent years' filing season compared to inventory levels carried into the 2024 Filing Season.

Figure 1: Comparison of Individual Return Inventory Carried Over to the Next Filing Season



Source: IRS Filing Season Statistics Report for the week ending December 28, 2019; IRS inventory numbers provided to the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) for the weeks ending December 29, 2020, December 28, 2021, December 30, 2022, and December 29, 2023; and the Customer Account Services Form 1040X Consolidated Inventory Report for the weeks ending December 28, 2019, December 26, 2020, January 1, 2022, December 31, 2022, and December 30, 2023. CY = Calendar Year. Amended Returns = Form 1040-X, Amended U.S. Individual Income Tax Return.

¹ See Appendix V for a glossary of terms.

Key tax law changes affecting the 2024 Filing Season

One of the continuing challenges the IRS faces each year in processing tax returns is the implementation of new tax law changes as well as changes resulting from expired tax provisions. The primary legislation affecting the 2024 Filing Season is the *Inflation Reduction Act of 2022* (IRA), signed into law on August 16, 2022.² While many IRA provisions have been implemented since being signed into law, a small number of provisions affect individual tax filers for Tax Year 2023. Figure 2 identifies the three provisions most relevant to the 2024 Filing Season and provides the estimated tax impact for each provision for Calendar Years 2024 through 2027.

Figure 2: Summary of IRA Provisions Affecting the 2024 Filing Season

Provision	Overview of Related Provisions	Tax Impact Calendar Years 2024 - 2027
Energy Efficient Home Improvement Credit (13301)	Renamed and replaced the existing Nonbusiness Energy Property Credit and extended the credit to property placed in service through December 31, 2032.	\$5.3 billion
Residential Clean Energy Credit (13302)	Renamed and replaced the existing Residential Energy Efficient Property Credit and increased the credit rate to 30 percent for property placed into service beginning in Tax Year 2022.	\$9.3 billion
Alternative Fuel Refueling Property Credit (13404)	Modified the existing credit for certain refueling property placed into service after Calendar Year 2022.	\$621 million

Source: *The IRA and the Joint Committee on Taxation JCX-18-22.*

We have separate audits that will address the IRS's implementation of Clean Vehicle Credits, Elective Payments and Credit Transferability, and the Direct File Pilot Program.³ In addition, we are monitoring potential legislation such as the *Tax Relief for American Families and Workers Act, 2024*. If enacted, the legislation would increase the refundable portion of the Child Tax Credit (CTC) from \$1,400 to \$1,800 for Tax Year 2023, \$1,900 for Tax Year 2024, and up to \$2,000 for Tax Year 2025. Annual inflation increases would impact the credit beginning after Tax Year 2023. During recent testimony, the IRS Commissioner stated that if the legislation is enacted, it will take six to 12 weeks for the IRS to implement the changes and complete the adjustments to tax accounts.⁴ Additionally, the Commissioner expects only 10 percent of households will be affected by the adjustment, which will allow the IRS to complete the adjustments quickly.

TIGTA reports on IRS Strategic Operating Plan and new organizational structure

In March 2024, TIGTA reported that the IRS publicly released its Strategic Operating Plan on April 6, 2023, noting that the plan outlines how the IRS will deliver transformational change for

² Pub. L. 117-169, 136 Stat. 1818.

³ See Appendix II for a list of TIGTA audits related to IRA tax law changes.

⁴ *Hearing with Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service, Daniel Werfel Before the H. Comm. on Ways and Means, 118th Cong. (2024).*

taxpayers.⁵ The Strategic Operating Plan outlines five transformation objectives, which are comprised of 42 initiatives. These initiatives outline how the IRS plans to provide best-in-class customer service and transform how taxpayers interact with the IRS, modernize technology and analytics, reduce the Tax Gap by focusing on taxpayers with complex filings and high-dollar noncompliance, and become an employer of choice.

In addition to the standup of the Transformation and Strategy Office, on December 13, 2023, the IRS Commissioner announced a new leadership structure noting this was a step designed to reflect the IRS's new transformation goals. The new structure, which became effective April 7, 2024, will help the IRS work efficiently as an agency and ensure that progress keeps moving forward. The IRS's new organizational structure features a single deputy IRS Commissioner and four new IRS chief positions.

As was announced in December 2023, these changes create more specialization at the top of the IRS's organizational chart. According to the IRS, the new structure will allow for more specialization on emerging priorities in the transformation work while strengthening the senior leadership team's oversight capability and flexibility on pressing tax administration issues. One of the four chiefs reporting to the Deputy Commissioner is the Chief, Taxpayer Services. This position will be responsible for many of the major taxpayer service functions currently handled by the Wage and Investment Division, including the filing season work and taxpayer-facing operations such as toll-free operations, tax return processing centers, Taxpayer Assistance Centers (TAC), tax forms, taxpayer correspondence, and publication development.

Results of Review

This report presents the interim results of our review to evaluate whether the IRS is timely and accurately processing Tax Year 2023 individual paper and electronically filed (e-filed) tax returns. The results are presented as of several dates between January 29, 2024, and March 30, 2024, depending on when the information was available.



Processing Tax Returns

Individual Tax Return Receipts and Number of Refunds Issued Decreased Slightly From the 2023 Filing Season

The IRS began processing individual tax returns on January 29, 2024. During Calendar Year 2024, the IRS expects to receive up to 167.1 million (nearly 9.5 million paper and 157.6 million e-filed) individual income tax returns. The total e-file volume is projected to

⁵ TIGTA, Report No. 2024-IE-R010, *Inflation Reduction Act: Continued Assessment of Transformation Efforts – Evaluation of Fiscal Year 2023 Delivery of Initiatives* (Mar. 2024). This review is part of TIGTA's continued assessment of the IRS's transformation efforts.

increase by 3.7 million (2.4 percent) in Calendar Year 2024. Figure 3 presents comparative statistics as of March 2, 2024. The statistics shown for the 2023 Filing Season represent a start date of January 23, 2023.

Figure 3: Comparative Filing Season Statistics

Cumulative Filing Season Data	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	% Change
Individual Income Tax Returns			
Total Returns Received (000s)	54,948	54,030	-1.7%
Paper Returns Received (000s)	1,350	1,235	-8.5%
E-Filed Returns Accepted (000s)	53,598	52,795	-1.5%
Practitioner-Prepared (000s)	25,210	24,516	-2.8%
Home Computer (000s)	28,387	28,279	-0.4%
Free File (000s) <i>(in the Home Computer total)</i>	1,006	1,147	14.0%
Percentage of Returns E-Filed	97.5%	97.7%	0.2%
Refunds			
Total Number Refunds Issued (000s)	42,040	36,288	-13.7%
Total Dollars	\$127.3 billion	\$115.5 billion	-9.3%
Average Refund Amount	\$3,028	\$3,182	5.1%
Total Number of Direct Deposits (000s)	39,907	35,369	-11.4%
Total Direct Deposit Dollars	\$124.3 billion	\$114.7 billion	-7.7%

Source: Filing Season Weekly Report for 2023 Filing Season figures are through March 3, 2023, and 2024 Filing Season figures are through March 2, 2024. Totals and percentages shown are rounded.

While e-file volumes decreased by 1.5 percent, the number of returns filed through the IRS Free File Program increased by 14 percent when compared to the same period during the 2023 Filing Season. We also observed the total number of refunds issued and total dollars decreased by 13.7 percent and 9.3 percent, respectively, when compared to the same period during the 2023 Filing Season. This slight decrease can be attributed to the filing season starting one week later in Calendar Year 2024 than it did in Calendar Year 2023. In addition, taxpayers may have delayed filing due to anticipated legislative changes. As of March 30, 2024, e-file volumes have surpassed the levels they were at as of March 31, 2023. We are currently conducting separate reviews of both the IRS’s Direct File Pilot and Free File Programs. We plan to issue an interim report for the Direct File Pilot Program in May 2024 and a final report later in Calendar Year 2024. The final report will continue to evaluate the volume and accuracy of tax returns submitted through the Direct File tool as well as the costs to implement the Direct File tool during the 2024 Filing Season. We will report on the IRS’s Free File Program later in Calendar Year 2024.⁶

Individual tax return inventories

The IRS establishes timeliness goals for its various tax return processing programs that reflect

⁶ TIGTA, Audit No. 2024408011, *Direct File Pilot Program* and TIGTA, Audit No. 202340028, *Free File Program – Follow-Up*.

the desired number of days it should take to work a tax return from receipt in the program’s inventory. Figure 4 provides the inventory levels in key tax return processing programs as of March 2, 2024, along with the percentage of the inventory that is aged and the program’s timeliness goal. The figures provided for paper tax returns and Error Resolution inventories show work received during Calendar Year 2024 and do not include any carryover work from previous filing seasons. The figures provided for Rejects, Unpostables, and Amended Returns represent work that could have been received during calendar years prior to 2024, *i.e.*, Tax Years 2020 through 2022 returns that have not completed processing, as well as Tax Year 2023 and prior work received during Calendar Year 2024.

Figure 4: Age of Tax Return Processing Inventories

Type of Work Remaining	Week Ending March 2, 2024	Percentage Aged	Aged Criteria
Paper Tax Returns	284,586	None	N/A
Error Resolution	151,517	0.4 percent	Over 5 days
Rejects	496,141	3.4 percent	Over 60 days
Unpostables	432,672	43.8 percent	Ranges from more than 3 weeks to more than 15 weeks
Amended Returns Worked by the Submission Processing Function	455,463	73.1 percent	More than 30 days
Amended Returns Worked by the Accounts Management Function	502,368	63.1 percent	More than 44 days

Source: IRS-provided weekly inventory levels for the week ending March 1, 2024, Submission Processing 1040X Inventory Report for the week ending March 1, 2024, Accounts Management Inventory Report for the week ending March 2, 2024, and Customer Account Services Form 1040X Consolidated Inventory Report for the week ending March 2, 2024.

In March 2024, we reported that concerns remain with the inventories of amended tax returns remaining to be worked, which are significantly above the pre-Pandemic levels.⁷ The Accounts Management function does not set goals specifically for amended individual tax returns inventories. In our discussions with IRS management, they indicated that the inventories of amended individual returns remained high because of high attrition and staffing shortages. As of April 2024, the IRS Submission Processing function estimates that amended individual tax return inventories will not be back to pre-Pandemic levels until December 2024.

The Accounts Management function surpassed its original hiring goal of 6,431 employees and increased its target to 6,831. As of March 2, 2024, the Accounts Management function has hired 6,820 employees or 106 percent of its original goal of 6,431. This increase in staff should help the IRS to decrease the amended tax return inventories discussed previously.

⁷ TIGTA, Report No. 2024-406-020, *The IRS Continues to Reduce Backlog Inventories in the Tax Processing Centers* (Mar. 2024).

In contrast, the IRS Submission Processing function is not meeting its hiring goal, but it is making progress towards that goal. As of March 5, 2024, the Submission Processing function has onboarded 62 percent of its goal of 3,600 employees. The IRS Submission Processing function has needed to alter its hiring strategies and take other actions to help balance work across the Tax Processing Centers. For example, during the 2024 Filing Season, the IRS is redirecting taxpayers in certain States to mail their tax return to the Austin Tax Processing Center instead of the Kansas City Tax Processing Center. In addition, the IRS continues to use Direct Hiring Authority to assist with meeting its hiring goals. We are conducting a separate review of the IRS's hiring efforts and expect to issue the report in Calendar Year 2024.⁸

Evaluation of new and modified e-file business rules

The IRS uses e-file business rules to identify errors on tax returns at the time the returns are filed. We selected 56 e-file business rules for in-depth testing that are new or were modified for the 2024 Filing Season. Our testing evaluated whether the IRS was accurately rejecting tax returns when applicable, and conversely whether any tax returns were erroneously accepted for processing. For example, we selected 29 business rules created to address legislative changes affecting the Residential Clean Energy Credit, Energy Efficient Home Improvement Credit, and Alternative Fuel Refueling Property Credit. Appendix III of this report contains a list of the business rules we reviewed.

As of February 9, 2024, our testing of 44 of the 56 business rules found that the majority of the rules are accurately rejecting tax returns or were intentionally disabled. We also identified two business rules that were not correctly rejecting tax returns and alerted the IRS of these issues on February 7, 2024, and March 18, 2024. IRS management agreed the rules were not working as intended and indicated they would take the necessary corrective actions to fix the programming. In addition, 10 of the 56 business rules have either had minimal or no rejections of tax returns as of February 9, 2024. We will continue to monitor and test rules with low or no reject counts, re-activated rules, or newly implemented rules and will report on their accuracy later in Calendar Year 2024.

Our review of accepted e-file tax returns identified no concerns that tax returns with the conditions described in the 56 rules were erroneously accepted for processing. In addition, we determined the 156 business rules that were documented as being deleted or disabled were accurately deleted or disabled for Tax Year 2023.

Expansion of the automated Error Resolution correction tool

The IRS implemented an automated Error Resolution correction tool during the 2022 Filing Season to shorten the time needed to resolve certain taxpayer errors that could delay their refund as well as to reduce the risk of IRS employee error. The IRS refers to this tool as the FixERS tool. This tool systemically replaces the steps an IRS Error Resolution employee would take to resolve the identified tax return errors. The IRS began using the FixERS tool to address common taxpayer errors when claiming the CTC, the Earned Income Tax Credit, the Child and Dependent Care Credit (CDCC), and the Recovery Rebate Credit (RRC). IRS management stated that they chose these errors because they expected tax returns with these errors to be the most impactful on taxpayers during the 2022 Filing Season.

⁸ TIGTA, Audit No. 202310812, *Improving the Hiring Process*.

The IRS expanded the FixERS tool to 21 error codes for the 2023 Filing Season and added two more codes for the 2024 Filing Season, bringing the total to 23 error codes. As of February 29, 2024, the IRS reports that 493,072 tax returns have been placed into production for the FixERS tool. From this population, 321,357 (65 percent) tax return errors were systemically resolved while 171,715 (35 percent) tax return errors were resuspended for manual processing. Appendix IV of this report contains a complete list and description for the 23 error codes.



Detecting and Preventing Tax Refund Fraud

Fraud Detection Processes Continue to Prevent and Detect the Issuance of Millions of Dollars in Fraudulent Refunds

The IRS continues to increase the number of fraudulent tax returns detected and stopped from entering the tax processing system, *i.e.*, rejecting e-filed tax returns and preventing paper tax returns from posting. For example, as of December 28, 2023, the IRS has locked taxpayer accounts of 53.7 million deceased individuals. This compares to 52.5 million accounts locked as of January 20, 2023. When tax accounts are locked, e-filed tax returns are rejected, and paper tax returns are prevented from posting to the Master File. According to the IRS, as of February 29, 2024, it had rejected 31,173 fraudulent e-filed tax returns and had stopped 173 paper tax returns from posting to the Master File as a result of the deceased taxpayer account locks.

In addition, as of February 24, 2024, the IRS reported that it identified 32,616 tax returns with approximately \$272.7 million claimed in fraudulent refunds and prevented the issuance of \$262.7 million (96.3 percent) of those refunds. This represents a decrease in the amount of fraudulent refunds stopped when compared to the same period during the 2023 Filing Season, although the number of refunds identified and stopped increased from the prior year. Figure 5 shows the number of fraudulent tax returns the IRS identified for Processing Years 2022, 2023, and 2024 as well as the refund amounts that were stopped.

Figure 5: Fraudulent Tax Returns and Refunds Identified and Stopped in Processing Years 2022, 2023, and 2024

Processing Year	Number of Fraudulent Refund Returns Identified	Number of Fraudulent Refund Returns Stopped	Amount of Fraudulent Refunds Identified	Amount of Fraudulent Refunds Stopped
2022	76,814	74,711	\$817,400,771	\$807,903,066
2023	31,079	30,730	\$310,724,203	\$303,718,702
2024	32,616	30,867	\$272,738,111	\$262,682,364

Source: IRS fraudulent tax return statistics for Processing Years 2022 (as of February 26, 2022), 2023 (as of February 25, 2023), and 2024 (as of February 24, 2024).

Detection of tax returns involving identity theft

For the 2024 Filing Season, the IRS is using 282 filters to detect potential identity theft tax returns and prevent the issuance of fraudulent refunds. In comparison, the IRS used 260 filters for the 2023 Filing Season. These filters incorporate criteria based on characteristics of confirmed identity theft tax returns, including amounts claimed for income and withholding, filing requirements, prisoner status, taxpayer age, and filing history. Tax returns identified by these filters are held during processing until the IRS can verify the taxpayer’s identity. If the individual’s identity cannot be confirmed, the IRS removes the tax return from processing to prevent the issuance of a fraudulent refund.

As of February 29, 2024, the IRS reported that it identified nearly 1.9 million tax returns with refunds totaling approximately \$16.5 billion for additional review as a result of the identity theft filters. As of that same date, the IRS had confirmed 15,242 tax returns as fraudulent and prevented the issuance of \$180.5 million in fraudulent refunds. Figure 6 shows the number of identity theft tax returns the IRS identified and confirmed as fraudulent in Processing Years 2023 and 2024 as of February 29, 2024.

Figure 6: Identity Theft Tax Returns Confirmed Fraudulent in Processing Years 2023 and 2024

Processing Year	Confirmed Identity Theft Returns
2023	12,617
2024	15,242

Source: IRS fraudulent tax return statistics for Processing Year 2023 (as of March 2, 2023) and Processing Year 2024 (as of February 29, 2024).

Identity theft protection

The IRS automatically issues an Identity Protection Personal Identification Number (IP PIN) to confirmed identity theft victims if the case is resolved prior to the start of the next filing season. Taxpayers nationwide can also request an IP PIN directly from the IRS if they are concerned that their personal information has been stolen and want to protect their identity when filing a Federal tax return. The IP PIN is a six-digit number assigned to eligible taxpayers to help prevent someone else from filing a fraudulent Federal income tax return using a taxpayer’s Social Security Number (SSN).⁹ The IP PIN is known only to the taxpayer and the IRS and acts as an authentication number to validate the correct owner of the SSN or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) listed on that tax return. This helps the IRS verify the taxpayer’s identity when they file their tax return. Taxpayers can request an IP PIN or retrieve their existing IP PIN by using the “Get an IP PIN” tool through IRS.gov. The IRS reports that it issued 1.1 million IP PINs to taxpayers who used this tool as of February 29, 2024.

⁹ Anyone who has an SSN or an ITIN and is able to verify their identity is eligible to enroll in the IP PIN program.

Screening of prisoner tax returns

To combat refund fraud associated with tax returns filed using prisoner SSNs, the IRS compiles a list of prisoners (the Prisoner File) received from the Federal Bureau of Prisons and State Departments of Corrections as well as Prisoner Update Processing System data from the Social Security Administration. These data files are used to identify for additional screening tax returns filed using a prisoner SSN. As of February 24, 2024, the IRS reported that it identified for screening 15,189 potentially fraudulent tax returns filed by prisoners.¹⁰ This represents an increase of 1.7 percent over the number of tax returns identified during the same period of the 2023 Filing Season. Figure 7 shows the number of prisoner tax returns identified for screening in Processing Years 2023 and 2024.

Figure 7: Prisoner Tax Returns Identified for Screening in Processing Years 2023 and 2024

Processing Year	Number of Prisoner Tax Returns Identified for Screening
2023	14,939
2024	15,189

Source: IRS fraudulent tax return prisoner strategy statistics for Processing Year 2023 (as of February 25, 2023) and Processing Year 2024 (as of February 24, 2024).



Providing Customer Service

IRS Customer Service Initiatives

The IRS provides assistance to millions of taxpayers via its website (IRS.gov), telephone, and social media platforms as well as face-to-face assistance at its TACs, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance sites, and Tax Counseling for the Elderly sites.

Online assistance

The IRS provides easy-to-use self-assistance options that enable taxpayers to access the information they need 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The most notable self-assistance option is the IRS's public Internet site, IRS.gov. The IRS reported 337.3 million visits to IRS.gov for the 2024 Filing Season as of March 2, 2024. In comparison, the IRS reported 289.8 million visits to IRS.gov for the 2023 Filing Season as of March 3, 2023, which is an increase of 16.4 percent. The IRS website provides a number of online tools to assist taxpayers. Figure 8

¹⁰ Tax returns filed using a prisoner's name and Taxpayer Identification Number.

provides examples of these online tools along with the number of times the tool was used as of February 24, 2024.

**Figure 8: Examples of Online Tool Uses for Processing Years 2023 and 2024
(as of Week Ending February 24, 2024)**

Tool	Description	Number of Uses in Processing Year 2023	Number of Uses in Processing Year 2024
<i>Interactive Tax Assistant</i>	A tax law resource that takes taxpayers through a series of questions and provides them with responses to basic tax law questions.	0.5 million	0.7 million
<i>Where's My Refund?</i>	Allows taxpayers to check the status of their refunds using the most up-to-date information available to the IRS.	140.7 million	163.9 million
<i>Where's My Amended Return?</i>	Allows taxpayers to check the status of their amended return using the most up-to-date information available to the IRS.	1.4 million	1.3 million

Source: IRS management information reports.

The *Where's My Refund?* and the *Where's My Amended Return?* tools are available on IRS.gov. The *Where's My Refund?* tool is also available on the IRS2Go mobile application. IRS2Go is a mobile application that allows taxpayers to check the status of their tax refund, make a payment, find free tax preparation assistance, sign up for helpful tax tips, and access IRS social media platforms. As of February 29, 2024, the IRS reported nearly 5.2 million active users for the IRS2Go application. In November 2023, we reported on the planned enhancements the IRS had for its online tools as part of the Strategic Operating Plan objectives to dramatically improve services to taxpayers.¹¹ On February 5, 2024, the IRS confirmed enhancements to the *Where's My Refund?* tool were implemented as of January 3, 2024. These enhancements include modernizing the *Where's My Refund?* tool to create a consistent experience for taxpayers when they access other IRS applications, such as online accounts, or when they call the toll-free telephone line. The enhancements also include tailored messages with information about common fraud and error conditions, detailed refund statuses in plain language, and notifications indicating whether the IRS needs additional information. We plan to review these enhancements and will include the results in our final filing season report later in Calendar Year 2024.

The IRS also launched a public-facing dashboard on its website, called the *Processing Status for Tax Forms*, which lists the current processing statuses for general correspondence and key tax forms e.g., Form 1040, *U.S. Individual Income Tax Return*, Form 941, *Employer's Quarterly Federal Tax Return*, and Form 1040-X. For e-filed tax returns, the processing status reflects the typical number of days it currently takes to process a form after receipt from the taxpayer. For paper tax returns, the processing status reflects which month of receipt is currently being processed. As of March 18, 2024, the IRS is currently processing paper Forms 1040 received in March 2024.

¹¹ TIGTA, Report No. 2024-400-006, *Final Results of the 2023 Filing Season* (Nov. 2023).

Finally, the IRS also allows taxpayers to create an online account, which is a safe and easy way for individual taxpayers to view specific details about their Federal tax account. For example, taxpayers can view the amount owed on their account, payment history, and key information from their most current tax return filed, *etc.* There are 39.5 million IRS.gov online accounts that have been created as of February 29, 2024.

Social media platforms

The IRS also offers taxpayers the ability to obtain information from the IRS using their mobile devices. For example, the IRS uses common social media platforms to share the latest information on tax changes, scam alerts, initiatives, and products and services. In addition, the IRS provides short, informative online videos in English, Spanish, Chinese, and American Sign Language. As of March 6, 2024, the IRS reported more than 1.3 million followers on the various social media platforms and 31.2 million views of its social media videos.¹²

Toll-free telephone level of assistance

As of March 2, 2024, taxpayers made 18.4 million total call attempts and 12.6 million net call attempts to contact the IRS by calling the various customer service toll-free telephone assistance lines.¹³ The IRS also reports that 4.1 million calls were answered with automation, and telephone assistors answered nearly 4.3 million calls and provided a 91 percent Level of Service with a 2-minute Average Speed of Answer. Figure 9 shows a comparison of toll-free performance for Calendar Years 2023 and 2024, as of March 2, 2024. The Level of Access, which TIGTA developed because the IRS's Level of Service measure did not reflect overall call demand, was 51.2 percent.

**Figure 9: Toll-Free Performance
Statistics for Calendar Years 2023 and 2024**

Statistic	Filing Season	
	2023	2024
Assistor Calls Answered	3,840,311	4,329,437
IRS Calculated Level of Service	82.1%	91.0%
Average Speed of Answer (Minutes)	5	2
TIGTA-Developed Level of Access ¹⁴	54.0%	51.2%

Source: IRS management information reports (as of March 4, 2023, for Calendar Year 2023 and as of March 2, 2024, for Calendar Year 2024).

¹² Individuals may use more than one social media platform; therefore, it would not be appropriate to consider the total number of followers as unique individuals.

¹³ Total call attempts represent calls received during all hours, open or not. This figure would include taxpayer hang-ups prior to selecting service. Total net call attempts represent calls received during open hours after removing transfers among product lines.

¹⁴ The Level of Access reflects the total of callers seeking assistance who receive it and is computed by taking the sum of Assistor Calls Answered and Automated Calls Answered divided by the Total Dialed Number Attempts Open Hours. TIGTA developed this metric in 2019 because the IRS's Level of Service measure did not reflect overall call demand. This is not an official IRS statistic.

In November 2023, TIGTA reported that the IRS met the Secretary of the Treasury’s expectations for the 2023 Filing Season reporting a level of service average of 85.2 percent as well as reducing the average wait time to answer a taxpayer’s call to approximately three minutes.¹⁵ However, the report noted that improvements are needed to ensure that taxpayers receive top quality service when contacting customer service telephone lines. TIGTA made four recommendations, including that the IRS evaluate the availability of resources to provide quality customer service on the telephone lines and ensure that all telephone lines that place callers on hold provide information on tax scams as legislatively required. The IRS agreed with each of TIGTA’s recommendations. In addition, TIGTA is conducting a review to assess the IRS’s efforts to improve toll-free access and reduce taxpayer wait times when calling for assistance and plans to issue a report later in Calendar Year 2024.¹⁶

The TACs

The IRS plans to assist about 2 million taxpayers at its TACs in Fiscal Year 2024, which is an increase of 22 percent from the number of taxpayers the IRS assisted during Fiscal Year 2023. Figure 10 shows the number of contacts by product line at the TACs for Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024.

Figure 10: TAC Contacts for Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024

Contacts/Product Lines	Fiscal Year	
	2023 Actual	2024 Projections
Tax Account Contacts	953,000	1,117,000
Form Contacts	52,000	61,000
Other Contacts	586,000	763,000
Tax Law Contacts	11,000	13,000
Totals	1,602,000	1,954,000

Source: IRS management information reports. Numbers shown are rounded.

Insufficient staffing continues to result in the TACs not being open to provide taxpayer assistance. As of March 4, 2024, the IRS reported that 17 of the 363 TACs were closed due to a lack of staffing. IRS management cautioned that the operating status of the TACs can vary day-to-day due to illness, staff leaving, or staff taking other positions within the IRS. For example, as of March 9, 2024, 155 of the 363 TACs the IRS operated were staffed with one or two IRS employees.

Similar to prior filing seasons, the IRS continues to use its appointment service for all TACs. When taxpayers call to schedule an appointment, the IRS will attempt to resolve the taxpayer’s question or provide the taxpayer with information on alternative services in order to prevent the

¹⁵ TIGTA, Report No. 2024-IE-R001, *Actions Are Needed to Improve the Quality of Customer Service in Telephone Operations* (Nov. 2023).

¹⁶ TIGTA, Audit No. 202310017, *Taxpayer Access to Telephone Service*.

need for an in-person visit. As of February 24, 2024, the IRS reported that IRS employees answered 718,446 calls to schedule an appointment. Of these, 397,962 calls necessitated that the taxpayer schedule an appointment and visit a TAC, and 320,484 taxpayers were assisted without having to visit a TAC.

In an effort to further assist taxpayers, on February 14, 2024, the IRS announced special Saturday hours at more than 50 locations for face-to-face help between February and May 2024. The IRS is offering service at select TACs on each of four monthly Saturdays beginning February 24, 2024, and ending May 18, 2024. On these dates, the centers provide taxpayers with in-person help between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., and no appointments are required. The IRS website posts information regarding the days and hours of operation and a list of services provided as well as whether the TAC is open on one of these four Saturday dates. According to IRS management, they have served 7,661 taxpayers in the 89 TACs that were open on February 24, 2024, and March 16, 2024.

Finally, in addition to the services offered via the TAC appointment line and at the TACs, the IRS also offers these additional face-to-face initiatives, as summarized in Figure 11.

Figure 11: Summary of IRS Face-to-Face Initiatives



Source: IRS management information reports.

TIGTA is conducting a review of the quality of service provided to taxpayers at the TACs and plans to issue a report later in Calendar Year 2024.¹⁷

Assistance at Volunteer Program sites

The Volunteer Program plays an important role in the IRS’s efforts to improve taxpayer service and facilitate participation in the tax system. The two main components in the Volunteer Program are the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance and the Tax Counseling for the Elderly programs. These programs provide no-cost tax return preparation and e-filing to underserved taxpayer segments, including low-income, elderly, disabled, rural, limited-English-proficient, and Native American taxpayers. As of March 4, 2024, Volunteer Program sites prepared more than 1 million tax returns at 8,261 Volunteer Program sites. Figure 12 shows the number of tax returns prepared by volunteers for Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024, as of March 4, 2024.

Figure 12: Volunteer Program Statistics for Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024 (as of March 4, 2024)

	Fiscal Year 2023	Fiscal Year 2024	Percentage Change
Tax Returns	1,005,092	1,048,048	4.3%
Sites	8,035	8,261	2.8%

Source: IRS management report showing the number of tax returns prepared for Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024, as of March 5, 2023, and March 3, 2024, and the number of Volunteer Income Tax Assistance sites as of March 6, 2023, and March 4, 2024. Percentages are rounded.

¹⁷ TIGTA, Audit No. 202210036, *Taxpayer Assistance Centers Generally Provided Quality Service, but Additional Actions Are Needed to Reduce Taxpayer Burden*.

Appendix I

Detailed Objective, Scope, and Methodology

The overall objective of this review was to evaluate whether the IRS timely and accurately processed individual paper and e-filed tax returns during the 2024 Filing Season. To accomplish our objective, we:

- Identified volumes of paper and e-filed tax returns received through March 2, 2024, from the IRS Weekly Filing Season reports that provide filing season statistics and compared the statistics to the same period for the 2023 Filing Season.
- Determined whether IRS monitoring systems indicate that individual tax returns were being processed timely and accurately. We monitored key IRS indicators, including the volume of tax return receipts, statistics from the IRS Filing Season Statistics Report, and Error Resolution volumes.
- Ensured that select business rules associated with the implementation of key tax provisions worked as intended. We evaluated the accuracy of the new business rules.
- Monitored current processing year volumes of inventory and monitored for any backlogs of inventory from Calendar Year 2023 using IRS reports.
- Obtained information related to Submission Processing and Accounts Management hiring and onboarding efforts.
- Identified results of the IRS tax refund fraud programs, including identity theft and prisoner refund fraud.
- Identified results of the IRS customer service programs, including the TAC Program, the Toll-Free Telephone Assistance Program, and the Volunteer Program.
- Identified results for the IRS's self-assistance options, including IRS.gov and the social media platforms.

Performance of This Review

This review was performed with information obtained from the Wage and Investment personnel in Atlanta, Georgia, and the Wage and Investment Division Submission Processing personnel in Covington, Kentucky, and the New Carrollton Federal Building in Lanham, Maryland, during the period October 2023 through March 2024. We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective.

Major contributors to the report were Diana M. Tengesdal, Assistant Inspector General for Audit (Returns Processing and Account Services); Sharla J. Robinson, Director; Tracy M. Hernandez, Audit Manager; Jordan D. Bunte, Lead Auditor; Cally Sessions, Senior Auditor; Nathan J. Cabello, Auditor; Branden L. Dreher, Auditor; Hong Cao, Information Technology Specialist;

Ismael Hernandez, Information Technology Specialist, and Theodore Logothetti, Information Technology Specialist.

Data Validation Methodology

During this review, we obtained extracts from the Modernized Tax Return Database for Processing Year 2024. Before relying on the data, we ensured that each file contained the specific data elements we requested. In addition, we selected judgmental samples of each extract and verified that the data in the extracts were the same as the data captured in the Employee User Portal database. We also performed analysis on the Modernized Tax Return Database extracts to ensure the validity and reasonableness of our data, such as ranges of dollar values and obvious invalid values. We determined that the data were sufficiently reliable for purposes of this report.

Internal Controls Methodology

Internal controls relate to management's plans, methods, and procedures used to meet their mission, goals, and objectives. Internal controls include the processes and procedures for planning, organizing, directing, and controlling program operations. They include the systems for measuring, reporting, and monitoring program performance. We determined that the following internal controls were relevant to our audit objective: the process for planning, organizing, directing, and controlling program operations for the 2024 Filing Season. We evaluated these controls by monitoring IRS weekly production meetings, reviewing IRS procedures, and reviewing IRS reports.

Appendix II**Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration Audits
of Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 Tax Law Changes**

This table presents in-process or planned TIGTA audits that will evaluate IRA provisions related to the filing and processing of individual tax returns.

Audit Number	Audit Title
2024408011	Inflation Reduction Act: Direct File Pilot Program
2024408016	Inflation Reduction Act: Registration for Elective Payment and Transfer Elections Through the Energy Credits Online Portal
202340825	Inflation Reduction Act: Review of Implementation Efforts on the New Clean, Commercial, and Previously Owned Vehicle Credits

Source: TIGTA Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Audit Plan.

Electronic Filing Business Rules

Figure 1 presents a description of the 56 e-file business rules we reviewed that were created or modified for the 2024 Filing Season.

Figure 1: Business Rules Reviewed for the 2024 Filing Season

Business Rule	Description
F1040-064-06	[REDACTED]
F1040-471	[REDACTED]
F5329-004	[REDACTED]
F5329-005	[REDACTED]
F5329-006	[REDACTED]
F5695-007-04	[REDACTED]
F5695-030-01	[REDACTED]
F5695-032	[REDACTED]
F5695-033	[REDACTED]
F5695-034	[REDACTED]
F5695-035	[REDACTED]

Interim Results of the 2024 Filing Season

Business Rule	Description
F5695-036	[REDACTED]
F5695-037	[REDACTED]
F5695-038	[REDACTED]
F5695-039	[REDACTED]
F5695-040	[REDACTED]
F5695-041	[REDACTED]
F5695-042	[REDACTED]
F5695-043	[REDACTED]
F5695-044	[REDACTED]
F5695-045	[REDACTED]
F5695-046	[REDACTED]
F5695-047	[REDACTED]
F5695-048	[REDACTED]
F5695-049	[REDACTED]

Interim Results of the 2024 Filing Season

Business Rule	Description
F5695-050	[REDACTED]
F5695-051	[REDACTED]
F5695-052	[REDACTED]
F5695-053	[REDACTED]
F5695-054	[REDACTED]
F8283-036	[REDACTED]
F8283-037	[REDACTED]
F8283-039	[REDACTED]
F8889-004	[REDACTED]
F8889-005	[REDACTED]
F8889-006	[REDACTED]
F8889-007	[REDACTED]
F8889-008	[REDACTED]

Interim Results of the 2024 Filing Season

Business Rule	Description
F8889-009	[REDACTED]
F8889-010	[REDACTED]
F8889-011	[REDACTED]
F8889-012	[REDACTED]
F8889-013	[REDACTED]
F8889-014	[REDACTED]
F8889-015	[REDACTED]
S3-F1040-024	[REDACTED]
S3-F1040-026	[REDACTED]
S3-F1040-028	[REDACTED]
S3-F1040-029	[REDACTED]
S3-F1040-156	[REDACTED]
SC-F1040-023	[REDACTED]
SC-F1040-024	[REDACTED]

Interim Results of the 2024 Filing Season

Business Rule	Description
SF-F1040-015-01	[REDACTED]
SF-F1040-024	[REDACTED]
SH-F1040-025	[REDACTED]
SSE-F1040-026	[REDACTED]

Source: IRS business rule list.

Appendix IV

Tax Return Errors Resolved Using the FixERS Tool

The IRS is using the FixERS tool during the 2024 Filing Season to address 23 common taxpayer errors for individual tax return filers. Figure 1 provides a brief description of the Error Resolution codes addressed using the FixERS tool.

Figure 1: FixERS Codes for the 2024 Filing Season

Error Resolution Code	Topic of Error Resolution Code	Description
017	ITIN Status Code	Sets when the ITIN Status Code is "I," meaning it is inactive for either the Primary, Secondary, any Dependent, or either Child Care Credit Dependent.
029	Unclaimed Credits	
034	Filing Status Code	Sets when the Filing Status Code is inconsistent with the requirements needed to claim the Filing Status. Filing Status Codes 4, 5, and 7 require the taxpayer to also claim dependents in order to qualify for that Standard Deduction.
075	Taxable Social Security Verified Amount	Sets when the Taxable Social Security Verified amount is not present. The only entries on the return are Total or Taxable Social Security and Withholding, with the Refund equaling the Withholding. Additionally, it will catch returns where the taxpayer does not list Taxable Social Security; however, there is an indication of a Lump Sum Election.
121	Excess Social Security Withholding and Railroad Retirement Tax Act	Sets when the taxpayer's figure for Excess Social Security or Railroad Retirement Tax Act Withholding is equal to or greater than the computer's computation. In order to claim this withholding, the taxpayer must have more than one employer and the combined withholding must exceed the limitation amounts.
214	Taxable Social Security Benefits	Sets when the taxpayer did not correctly figure their Taxable Social Security Benefits amount. This calculation is based on amounts claimed in other fields of the return, including their Gross Taxable Social Security amount.
248	Qualified Business Income Deduction	Sets when the Qualified Business Income Deduction amount is not supported by business income reported on the return.
280	CDCC	Sets when the taxpayer's amount for the CDCC and the computer's calculation for this credit differ. This can be caused by a miscalculation by the taxpayer or by an action taken in a previous error code.
287	Child and Other Dependent Credit and the Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC)	Sets when the difference between Child and Other Dependent Credit and the computer's calculation is greater than \$2. It will also generate when the difference between the ACTC/Refundable Child Tax Credit and the computer's calculation is greater than \$2.

Interim Results of the 2024 Filing Season

Error Resolution Code	Topic of Error Resolution Code	Description
289	Total Children Eligible for the CTC	Sets when the Total Children Eligible for the CTC and/or total number of dependents eligible for Credit for Other Dependents are present, and any of Forms 8839, <i>Qualified Adoption Expenses</i> , 8396, <i>Mortgage Interest Credit</i> , 8859, <i>Carryforward of the District of Columbia First-Time Homebuyer Credit</i> , 8834, <i>Qualified Electric Vehicle Credit</i> , 8912, <i>Credit to Holders of Tax Credit Bonds</i> , 8978, <i>Partner's Additional Reporting Tax Year</i> , or Other Credits are present, and either the CTC and Other Dependent Credit Verified is not present or the ACTC Verified and Refundable CTC Verified is not present.
290	Child and Other Dependent Credit	Sets when a math error is present between the taxpayer's amount for Child and Other Dependent Credit and the computer's amount, and the taxpayer's amount and the computer amount for Total Tax do not agree.
291	Residential Clean Energy Credit and Energy Efficient Home Improvement Credit	Sets when a math error is present between the taxpayer's amount for Residential Clean Energy Credit or Energy Efficient Home Improvement Credit and the computer's amount, and the taxpayer's Total Tax Liability and the computer's amount for Total Tax do not agree.
298	Clean Vehicle Credit and Previously Owned Vehicle Credit	Sets when the Tax Period is 202312 and later and one or more invalid conditions exist, such as the taxpayer's Clean Vehicle Credit or Previously Owned Vehicle Credit amounts do not agree with the computer's amount, non-matching entries on Form 8936, <i>Clean Vehicle Credits</i> , and Schedule A (Form 8936), or the presence of Special Processing Code 'R'.
328	First-Time Homebuyer Credit	Sets when it appears the Primary and/or Secondary taxpayer must repay their First-Time Homebuyer Credit and are not making any payments on their return.
329	Repayment of First-Time Homebuyer Credit	Sets when the Primary and/or Secondary taxpayer are repaying their First-Time Homebuyer Credit; however, a math error is present. This may occur if the Secondary taxpayer listed their Taxpayer Identification Number on the repayment form; however, the credit is under the Primary taxpayer's SSN, etc. This may also occur if they are paying over or under the amount they owe each year.
336	Earned Income Credit (EIC)	Sets when the taxpayer is claiming the EIC and an error is present with either the Primary, Secondary, or a Dependent's Taxpayer Identification Number Assignment Date, <i>i.e.</i> , the Taxpayer Identification Number Assignment Date is later than the due date of the return. This may also generate if Schedule EIC is present and EIC Amount is significant and the number of EIC SSNs present does not equal the computer's amount in Qualified EIC Dependent Number.
337	EIC With Schedule EIC	Sets when the amount claimed for the EIC differs from the computer amount and Schedule EIC is present, meaning dependents are claimed for the credit.
338	EIC Without Schedule EIC	Sets when the amount for EIC differs from the computer amount and Schedule EIC is not present, dependents are not being claimed for the credit.

Interim Results of the 2024 Filing Season

Error Resolution Code	Topic of Error Resolution Code	Description
344	ACTC not Tax Year 2021	Sets when the Tax Period is not Tax Year 2021, the taxpayer amount for the ACTC differs from the computer's amount, and Total Payments is not equal to Total Payments Computer.
345	ACTC Tax Year 2021	This affects Tax Year 2021 only. Generates when the taxpayer's amount for the ACTC differs from the computer's amount, and Total Payments is not equal to Total Payments Computer.
350	RRC Tax Year 2021	This affects Tax Year 2021 only. Generates when the taxpayer's amount for the RRC differs from the computer's amount, and Total Payments does not equal Total Payments computer. The taxpayer did not correctly report their RRC amount.
363	CDCC Tax Year 2021	This affects Tax Year 2021 only. Sets when the taxpayer's amount for the CDCC and the computer's calculation for this credit differ. This can be caused by a miscalculation by the taxpayer or by an action taken in a previous error code. For example, if a dependent is disqualified in error code 017 because their ITIN is inactive, and this dependent is claimed for the CDCC, it will change the calculation causing a math error to set. This may also be caused by taxpayer failure to check the Principal Abode Box on Form 2441, allowing the refundable portion of this credit.
601	Total Tax Exceeds 50 Percent of Adjusted Gross Income	Generates when the taxpayer's Total Tax reported exceeds 50 percent of their adjusted gross income. Tax examiners are instructed to check for transcription errors and verify the tax claimed.

Source: IRS management-provided list of error codes and descriptions.

Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Adjusted Gross Income	Gross income minus adjustments to income. Gross income includes wages, dividends, capital gains, business income, and retirement distributions as well as other income. Adjustments to income include such items as educator expenses, student loan interest, alimony payments, or contributions to a retirement account.
Business Rule	Used to validate information included on e-filed tax returns for acceptance into tax return processing. The IRS will reject e-filed tax returns from processing when the tax return does not meet a business rule.
Child and Dependent Care Credit	A tax credit for expenses that are paid for the care of a qualifying individual to enable taxpayers to work or to actively look for work.
Child Tax Credit	A tax credit for families with qualifying children.
Earned Income Tax Credit	A refundable tax credit for low-income to moderate-income workers.
Employee User Portal	The internal IRS portal that allows employees to access IRS data and systems, such as tax administration processing systems and financial information systems, in a secure, authenticated session.
Error Resolution	An online computer application used by tax examiners to correct errors identified on individual or business tax returns during processing.
Error Resolution Code	These codes validate the accuracy of tax returns during processing. When a return is identified with an error condition, the IRS suspends the return from processing and sends it to a tax examiner to correct the error. Once the error is corrected, the IRS continues to process the tax return.
Filing Season	The period from January 1 through mid-April when most individual income tax returns are filed.
Fiscal Year	Any yearly accounting period, regardless of its relationship to a calendar year. The Federal Government's fiscal year begins on October 1 and ends on September 30.
Free File	A free Federal tax preparation and e-filing program for eligible taxpayers developed through a partnership between the IRS and the Free File, Inc. (FFI). Free File, Inc. is a group of private sector tax software companies.
Integrated Data Retrieval System	IRS computer system capable of retrieving or updating stored information. It works in conjunction with a taxpayer's account records.
Level of Access	The total number of calls seeking assistance that ultimately receive assistance from the IRS. This is computed by taking the sum of Assistor Calls Answered and Automated Calls Answered divided by Total Dialed Number Attempts Open Hours.

Interim Results of the 2024 Filing Season

Term	Definition
Level of Service	The primary measure of service to taxpayers. It calculates the level of service taxpayers who call the Accounts Management function's toll-free telephone lines have at speaking with an assistor. Further, it is a budget measure used to determine the resources for the toll-free telephone lines. The IRS's measure is titled Customer Service Representative Level of Service.
Master File	The IRS database that stores various types of taxpayer account information. This database includes individual, business, and employee plans and exempt organizations data.
Modernized Tax Return Database	The official repository of all electronic returns processed through the Modernized e-File system.
Paper Tax Returns Waiting to Be Processed	Tax returns that have not yet been entered into the IRS's tax processing system.
Prisoner File	The IRS compiles a list of prisoners received from the Federal Bureau of Prisons and State Departments of Corrections as well as Prisoner Update Processing System data from the Social Security Administration.
Processing Year	The calendar year in which the IRS processes the tax return or document.
Rejects	Tax returns that cannot be processed, usually due to missing or incomplete information. Tax examiners correspond with the taxpayer to clarify an entry on a return. When the taxpayer responds, the tax examiner will resolve the issue and the return will continue processing.
Tax Examiner	An employee located in a field office who conducts examinations through correspondence. However, the tax examiner position is also used for many other types of positions located in various IRS offices.
Tax Year	A 12-month accounting period for keeping records on income and expenses used as the basis for calculating the annual taxes due. For most individual taxpayers, the tax year is synonymous with the calendar year.
Taxpayer Assistance Center	Local offices nationwide staffed by IRS employees who are trained to provide a variety of services including answering tax account questions, taking cash payments, and authenticating the identity of individuals who have been identified as potential victims of tax-related identity theft.
Taxpayer Identification Number	A nine-digit number assigned to taxpayers for identification purposes. Depending upon the nature of the taxpayer, it can be an Employer Identification Number, an SSN, an Adoption Taxpayer Identification Number, or an ITIN.
Unpostables	Transactions that will not post to the taxpayer's account because they failed validity checks. The unpostable condition must be resolved in order to complete processing of the transaction.

Interim Results of the 2024 Filing Season

Term	Definition
Volunteer Program	Includes the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program (both the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Grant program and the Tax Counseling for the Elderly program). The Volunteer Program provides free tax assistance to persons with low-to-moderate income (generally defined as within the Earned Income Tax Credit threshold), senior citizens, persons with disabilities, persons living in rural areas, those with limited English proficiency, and Native Americans.

Abbreviations

ACTC	Additional Child Tax Credit
CDCC	Child and Dependent Care Credit
CTC	Child Tax Credit
e-file(d); e-filing	Electronically File(d); Electronic Filing
EIC	Earned Income Credit
IP PIN	Identity Protection Personal Identification Number
IRA	Inflation Reduction Act of 2022
IRS	Internal Revenue Service
ITIN	Individual Taxpayer Identification Number
RRC	Recovery Rebate Credit
SSN	Social Security Number
TAC	Taxpayer Assistance Center
TIGTA	Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration



**To report fraud, waste, or abuse,
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oi.govreports@tigta.treas.gov.**

**To make suggestions to improve IRS policies, processes, or systems
affecting taxpayers, contact us at www.tigta.gov/form/suggestions.**

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