

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Montana Department of Revenue Expands Service as Tax Deadline Approaches

Helena – To accommodate taxpayers during the week before the April 15 deadline for filing income tax returns, the Montana Department of Revenue will offer expanded hours at its call center.

Taxpayers who need assistance can call the department's call center toll free at (866) 859-2254, or in Helena at 444-6900. Regular call center hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., but on April 10 and 11 the call center will be open from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. On Saturday, April 12, it will be open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. And on April 14 and 15 it will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

As in recent years, the department strongly encourages taxpayers to file their taxes electronically.

"It takes a great deal of time, resources and taxpayer money for the department to process paper returns," says Revenue Director Mike Kadas. "But when people e-file their returns, we have those returns in our system automatically, which equates to saving time and money. Plus, taxpayers get their refunds much sooner than if they filed by paper."

Taxpayers can file electronically using the department's e-filing service, Taxpayer Access Point (TAP), or one of the many commercial e-filing products. For electronic filing options, visit revenue.mt.gov.

Currently, taxpayers who file electronically are receiving their state refunds in about five to seven business days. Those who file by paper are receiving their refunds in about four to five weeks on average.

The department so far this year has processed more than 327,000 individual income tax returns for the 2013 tax year. These numbers include both electronic and paper returns. The

department has issued 269,239 refunds averaging \$416 for a total of \$111.8 million. Taxpayers can check the status of their refund using a service on the department website called “Where’s My Refund.” This feature allows taxpayers to track their refunds and gauge when they might appear in their bank accounts or in their mailbox.

In addition to contacting the department call center, taxpayers can also receive assistance by visiting the Mitchell Building in Helena, 126 North Sanders, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Customer parking is on the building’s east side. Assistance is also available at the department’s offices in Missoula at 2681 Palmer Street. If taxpayers need help filing electronically, they can simply prepare their state income tax return on paper and take it to the office. There, we’ll help them e-file at no cost. So far this year, the department has helped several hundred taxpayers who visited these two offices.

There are also more than 100 volunteer tax preparation sites around the state through Volunteer Income Tax Assistance and AARP Tax-Aide Montana. To find out if you qualify and to see a comprehensive listing of locations, visit montanafreefile.org. Taxpayers can also use an authorized tax preparer for assistance. For more information, visit revenue.mt.gov.

April 15 is also the deadline for submitting an application for the Property Tax Assistance Program (PTAP), which gives property tax relief to qualified low-income homeowners. It’s also the deadline to submit the 2EC, an income tax credit for elderly homeowners and renters. Go to revenue.mt.gov/Portals/9/property/forms/PPB-8_2014.pdf to download an application for PTAP and to revenue.mt.gov/Portals/9/individuals/forms/Form_2EC_2013.pdf to download the 2EC form.

Editor’s note: Please let us know if you would like to get b-roll or photographs at the call center or other service locations.

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