



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GOVERNOR PROCLAIMS JANUARY 31 EITC AWARENESS DAY *FEDERAL TAX CREDIT IMPROVES LIVES OF WORKING LOW INCOME FAMILIES*

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—A statewide push is on for working Tennesseans to receive millions of dollars that are left unclaimed every year. Last year, more than 550,000 low income families and individuals in the state received the Earned Income Tax Credit, with refunds totaling \$1.1 billion dollars. Yet the IRS estimates that up to 25 percent of Tennesseans who would have qualified for the money didn't claim it.

"The Earned Income Tax Credit is a powerful tool designed to help our low income working citizens," said Governor Phil Bredesen. "Andrea and I are proud to help in the effort to raise awareness of this valuable federal tax refund and want all Tennesseans who qualify to take advantage of this benefit."

Governor Bredesen is proclaiming January 31 Tennessee Earned Income Tax Credit Awareness Day. First Lady Andrea Conte recorded several public service announcements that are currently running on radio stations across the state. Listeners are urged to call 2-1-1 to find out where the nearest Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site is located. The Department of Human Services is also encouraging clients who participate in the Food Stamps and Families First programs to have their taxes done for free at their local VITA site and claim all of the money they are due.

"Every day, thousands of Tennesseans are needlessly spending money on commercial tax preparation sites when they could be getting their taxes done for free," said Department of Human Services Commissioner Gina Lodge. "DHS realizes our clients are working diligently to become self-sufficient, and visiting a VITA site and claiming the EITC will help them more quickly achieve this goal."

DHS has teamed up with the United Way's 2-1-1 community services information line, the Tennessee Alliance for Financial Independence and the IRS to direct low income clients to their nearest VITA site location. DHS has also mailed more than 200,000 letters to Food Stamp and Families First clients urging them to file for free and claim the credit. Front-line staff at all DHS offices are making sure clients are given information about the federal tax credit.

The following lists the maximum credit a single, head of household filer can claim:

Income Qualifications and Refund Examples

Earned income and adjusted gross income less than:	Maximum Credit:
• \$37,783 with two or more qualifying children (\$39,783 if married and filing jointly)	\$4,716
• \$33,241 with one qualifying child (\$35,241 if married and filing jointly)	\$2,853
• \$12,590 with no qualifying children (\$14,590 if married and filing jointly)	\$428

For more information on the EITC and local VITA sites, or to hear Andrea Conte's PSA, visit: www.tnafi.org
For more information on DHS and its programs, visit: www.state.tn.us/humanserv

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