



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

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**GOVERNOR PROCLAIMS JANUARY 29TH EITC AWARENESS DAY
WORKING FAMILIES URGED TO CLAIM FEDERAL TAX CREDIT**

NASHVILLE, Tenn.— Every year, thousands of Tennessee families leave money on the table. That’s because they don’t know about the Earned Income Tax Credit. National experts call the EITC one of the most effective anti-poverty programs in the nation, and last year, more than 600,000 Tennesseans took advantage of it. They received \$1.28 billion dollars back. But the IRS estimates that 20 to 25 percent of individuals and families who could qualify for this tax credit don’t claim it. That’s why Governor Phil Bredesen is joining the United Way and the Tennessee Department of Human Services in spreading the word about EITC and free tax filing locations, called VITA sites.

“It’s important for Tennesseans who qualify to know about and claim this valuable tax credit,” said Governor Bredesen. “Especially in the current economic climate, families need the opportunity to receive all the benefits to which they are entitled. I am proud to take part again this year in the effort to raise awareness of the EITC and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance sites.”

Governor Bredesen has proclaimed January 29th Tennessee Earned Income Tax Credit Awareness Day. He recorded a public service announcement that is currently running on television stations across the state. Viewers 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 Stamp 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. More than 200,000 notices were sent to clients who are eligible for the EITC benefit.

“We realize our clients are working harder than ever to make ends meet,” said Commissioner Virginia T. Lodge. “We want to reinforce their efforts by raising awareness about the EITC, which allows low-income families to receive a substantial refund from their federal income taxes.”

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.

The EITC was launched in the mid-1970’s. It is a refundable federal income tax credit that provides hundreds, even thousands of dollars to qualified filers each year, depending on family size and income.

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:
• \$13,440; (\$18,440 if married filing jointly) with no qualifying child	\$457
• \$35,463; (\$40,463 if married filing jointly) with one qualifying child	\$3,043
• \$40,295; (\$45,295 if married filing jointly) with two qualifying children	\$5,028
• \$43,279; (\$48,279 if married filing jointly) with three or more qualifying children	\$5,657

For more information on the EITC and local VITA sites, call 2-1-1 or visit the Tennessee Alliance for Financial Independence at www.tnafi.org . For more information on DHS and its programs, visit: www.tn.gov/humanserv .

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