

## ***Information Release: Avoid Common Tax Return Errors***

Incorrect Social Security numbers

Media Contact      Stephanie Ferdinand  
Stephanie Ferdinand EA  
Call Toll Free: 1-800-891-8983  
Email: [contact@stephanieferdinandea.com](mailto:contact@stephanieferdinandea.com)

### **Incorrect Social Security numbers top list of most common tax mistakes** *Rejected returns can delay refund several weeks, months*

At the close of each tax filing season, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) compiles a list of the most common errors taxpayers make when filing their tax returns. Believe it or not, incorrect mathematical calculations are not the number one error. The most frequent culprit for the past several years is submitting incorrect Social Security numbers on individual income tax returns.

When an incorrect return is filed, the IRS first “rejects” it, then sends a notice to the taxpayer requesting additional information. This can delay a refund by several weeks, or even months. In other instances, the IRS may issue a refund, but for a lesser amount than what the taxpayer was expecting. This may occur when a claimed dependent has a missing or incorrect Social Security number, or when another taxpayer claims the same dependent

Another reason a taxpayer may receive a reduced refund is if they are eligible to claim a tax credit for child and dependent care expenses but do not include the Social Security number or Taxpayer Identification Number of their caregiver on the tax return. The IRS will issue the refund, less the amount of the credit. The taxpayer will then have to file an amended return and wait several more weeks for the rest of their money. All this can be avoided if care is given when entering the required information on a return.

Other details to keep in mind when filing taxes this year include:

- If paper filing, sign the return in the proper places. If filing a joint tax return with a spouse, both must sign. If one spouse has passed away during the year, the surviving spouse must write “Deceased,” the spouse’s name and the date of death across the top of the return, above the area where the address is entered. The surviving spouse should also sign the return and write “filing as surviving spouse” in the signature area below their signature.
- For proper filing, attach Copy B of all Forms W-2 received during the year to the federal return. Also, attach any Forms 1099 that report tax withholding. For electronic filing, all appropriate Form W-2 or Form 1099 information should be entered on the input-form, which is included with the electronic return.
- Mail the return to the proper address. The IRS often changes the address for mailing returns. If the taxpayer has a balance due, they must use a payment voucher and mail their return to a lockbox instead of the service center. If electronically filed, the chance of mailing the return to the wrong service center is virtually eliminated.
- If the taxpayer owes money this year, make the check payable to the United States Treasury, not the IRS.
- Double-check the tax from the tax tables, as well as all calculations.
- Make a copy of the return for record purposes.
- Be certain there is enough postage on the envelope. Include the full return address. If the taxpayer owes, it’s a good idea to spend the extra dollars and use registered mail so there is a record that the IRS received the return if they are paper filing.