

Timeline for Operating VITA/TCE Sites

Opening and Operating Your Site

As a site coordinator, you are responsible for planning, organizing, supervising, and promoting all aspects of your program. Your SPEC Relationship Manager is available to help you build an effective program. As a site coordinator you should possess:

- The willingness to devote the time and effort required to prepare accurate tax returns and answer questions in a courteous and helpful manner;
- A strong volunteer spirit and organizational skills to assist in site coordination and allow volunteers to have a rewarding experience;
- The ability to recruit and retain volunteers with special skills that would benefit the site; for example, volunteers who are bi-lingual or have the ability to assist hearing and visually impaired taxpayers; and
- A willingness to learn and use electronic tax return skills and techniques.

A change in current Minimum Returns Requirement Policy:

Effective October 1, 2014, the minimum returns for software will increase from 35 to 50. This new policy applies to software orders placed for Filing Season 2016. Territories will use Filing Season 2015 production to determine if sites meet this minimum requirement.

Filing Season Timeline

To assist you in operating and managing your site, review the Filing Season Timeline below:

June – July

- **New sites:** Request a Site Identification Number (SIDN) from your SPEC Relationship Manager.
- Begin initial volunteer recruitment efforts.
- **New sites:** Responsible Official must register and apply for an EFIN (Electronic Filing Identification Number) using e-Services after obtaining a SIDN.
- **Existing sites:** Continue volunteer recruitment and retention efforts for next filing season.

August – September:

- Order electronic filing software through your SPEC office.
- Order training materials by completing Form 2333V, *Order for VITA/TCE Program*, and submit the order to your SPEC Relationship Manager or through the electronic product ordering system.
- If required, sign Form 13324, *IRS Civil Rights Assurance for Sub-recipients under SPEC Partnership Agreements*, or Form 13325, *Statement of Assurance Concerning Civil Rights Compliance for IRS SPEC Partnerships*, and return the signed form to SPEC office.
- Complete and sign Form 13533, *VITA/TCE Partner Sponsor Agreement*.

October:

- Escalate volunteer recruitment.
- Select or confirm site location(s), dates and days open, opening and closing times.
- Identify instructors for electronic filing, tax law training, and certification.
- Schedule date and place for volunteer training and certification, including tax preparation software training.
- Complete any additional training material orders on Form 2333-V, *Order for VITA/TCE Program*, and submit to your SPEC Relationship Manager.
- Identify/secure computer equipment for volunteer tax site(s).

November – December:

- Complete any additional Forms 2333-V, *Order for VITA/TCE Program*, for training material orders and submit to your SPEC Relationship Manager.
- Begin both electronic filing and volunteer tax law training and certification classes, including Site Coordinators Training.
- Begin community awareness publicity.
- Meet with volunteers to plan strategy for staffing/operating site(s).
- Identify volunteer(s) who will serve as alternate site/local coordinator in your absence and ensure that they receive Site Coordinator Training.
- Verify forms order and supplies for sites.
- Continue volunteer training and certification.
- Complete Form 13715, *Volunteer Site Information Sheet*, and submit to SPEC Office.

January:

- Post publicity posters.
- Continue volunteer training and certification; develop a process to communicate to volunteers the operations used at the site.
- Ensure each volunteer has a name badge, or issue them Form 14509, *Volunteer ID Insert*, and Document 13123, *Volunteer ID Holder*.
- Conduct volunteer meeting to assign volunteer roles and responsibilities.
- Establish a process to identify every volunteer who prepared or made changes to a tax return.
- Ensure a **current** Publication 4053 (EN/SP) or a **current** AARP Poster (D-143) is displayed at the site to notify taxpayers of Civil Rights procedures.
- Ensure tax preparation software is installed on computers; and specific roles assigned for all volunteers; limit volunteer access to applicable responsibilities.
- Ensure a current Publication 4836, *VITA/TCE Free Tax Programs – English & Spanish poster* is displayed at the site to notify individuals how to report unethical behavior.
- Ensure tax software defaults are set using Edit Tax Form Defaults in TaxWise Desktop or Return Templates in TaxWise On-line. The Master Template is available for use in TaxWise On-Line. Instructions are available in the Publication 3189, *Volunteer E-File Administrator's Guide*. Verify SIDN and EFIN are correct.
- Secure volunteer signed and dated, and partner certified (signed and dated) Form 13615, *Volunteer Standards of Conduct Agreement – VITA/TCE Programs*, from all volunteers.
- Complete Form 13715, *Volunteer Site Information Sheet*, and submit to SPEC office.
- Monitor site Intake and Interview process to ensure all volunteers are using Form 13614-C, *Intake/Interview and Quality Review Sheet*, for every return prepared.

February – March:

- Complete Form 13206, *Volunteer Assistance Summary Report*, online and send a printout to your Partner. Your partner will provide instructions on how you will deliver volunteer summary reports to them. However, if you are the site coordinator and also the partner or a Military VITA site coordinator, you will send the Form 13206 or similar listing to your SPEC Relationship Manager.

- Partners and Military Site Coordinators should provide the SPEC Territory office a list of certified volunteers by February 3rd.
- Discuss all Volunteer Tax Alerts (VTA) and Quality Site Requirements Alerts (QSRA) with all volunteers.
- If necessary, update Form 13715, *Volunteer Site Information Sheet*, and submit to SPEC office.
- Begin to work with your IRS SPEC Relationship Manager to prepare certificates of appreciation for volunteers.
- Identify volunteer milestone recipients, complete and submit templates by February 25.

April – May:

- Complete the Continuing Education (CE) Credits section of Form 13615 for volunteers requesting CE credits. Instructions for completion are provided on Form 13615.
- Plan and attend volunteer/sponsor recognition ceremonies.
- Collect and store for next year, all IRS Volunteer ID Inserts and Holders (Forms 14509 & Documents 13123).
- Complete certificates of appreciation for volunteers.
- Initiate formal appreciation for site sponsor (certificate and letter).
- Initiate site close-out procedures as referenced in this publication; and post-filing software procedures as referenced in Publication 3189, *Volunteer e-file Administration Guide*.
- If e-filing, ensure all applicable Forms 8453 were submitted to the IRS Submission Processing Center.
- Evaluate filing season, site operations, and volunteers.
- Provide SPEC Relationship Manager with feedback or complete Partner Survey to improve or enhance operation for next year.
- When applicable, secure/confirm site location for next year.
- Begin volunteer recruitment for next filing season.

Action Plans for Next Year

Notes and Comments

To assist you in future planning, please note any additional action plans items and share with your SPEC Relationship Manager.