

Taxpayer Advocate Service

Your Voice at the IRS



YOUR VOICE AT THE IRS



Welcome



YOUR VOICE AT THE IRS



Who We Are

- An independent organization within the IRS
- Services are free
- Offices in every state, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico



Our Mission

We help taxpayers resolve problems with the IRS and recommend changes to prevent the problems.



YOUR VOICE AT THE IRS



TAS Leadership

- **Nina E. Olson**
National Taxpayer Advocate
- **Matt Weir**
Deputy National Taxpayer Advocate
- **Rena Girinakis**
Executive Director, Systemic Advocacy
- **Kim Stewart & Karen Truss**
Executive Directors, Case Advocacy



TAS Offices

- Office of the National Taxpayer Advocate
 - Washington, D.C.
- 75 local TAS offices nationwide
 - One or more in every state
 - One in District of Columbia
 - One in Puerto Rico
 - One at each IRS campus



What We Do

- TAS is your voice at the IRS!
- We offer fair, independent, and free help
- You may be eligible for TAS help if you've been unable to resolve your tax problem through normal IRS channels
- TAS helps taxpayers whose IRS problems are causing financial difficulty or significant cost
- TAS employees know the IRS and how to navigate it
- ***The worst thing you can do is nothing at all!***



When We Get Involved

Most cases can and should be resolved
through normal IRS channels

The Taxpayer Advocate Service
is not a second IRS



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Some Normal IRS Channels

- Taxpayer Assistance Centers
- Toll-free telephone service
- Practitioner priority service



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TAS Criteria: Economic Burden

- Suffering economic harm
- Facing adverse IRS action
- Will incur significant cost
- Will suffer irreparable injury



TAS Criteria: Systemic Burden

- Delay of more than 30 days past normal processing time
- No response by promised date
- Systemic or procedural failure



TAS Criteria

- **Best interest of the Taxpayer**
The manner in which the tax laws are being administered raises considerations of equity or has impaired or will impair the taxpayer's rights
- **Public Policy**
The NTA determines compelling public policy warrants special assistance to an individual or group of taxpayers



Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TBOR)

- Commissioner Koskinen and NTA Nina Olson recently announced the IRS's adoption of the Taxpayer Bill of Rights
- In the coming months, the IRS will review all internal processes to make sure taxpayer rights are considered



Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TBOR)

The right to:

1. Be Informed
2. Quality Service
3. Pay No More than the Correct Amount of Tax
4. Challenge the IRS's Position and Be Heard
5. Appeal an IRS Decision in an Independent Forum



Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TBOR)

The right to:

6. Finality

7. Privacy

8. Confidentiality

9. Retain Representation

10. A Fair and Just Tax System



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Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TBOR)

For more information, visit TBOR pages on our Tax Toolkit at:

www.TaxpayerAdvocate.irs.gov/taxpayer-rights



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TAS Authority

- Taxpayer Assistance Order (TAO)
- Taxpayer Advocate Directive (TAD)



Bringing Systemic Issues to TAS

Systemic Advocacy Management System (SAMS)

- Web-based system to receive advocacy issues, ideas, suggestions
- For taxpayers and practitioners, as well as academic, research, and professional organizations
- <http://www.irs.gov/Advocate/Systemic-Advocacy-Management-System-SAMS>



Systemic Advocacy

- Part of TAS organization
- Works on issues affecting MULTIPLE taxpayers (individuals or businesses)

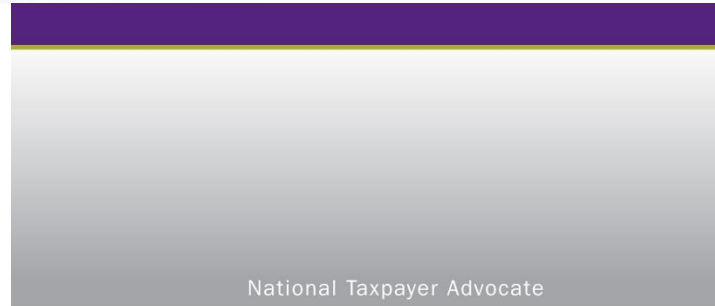


Reports to Congress

- Annual Report to Congress and Objectives Report to Congress
- Submitted to Congress without Treasury or IRS review
- Available at www.TaxpayerAdvocate.irs.gov

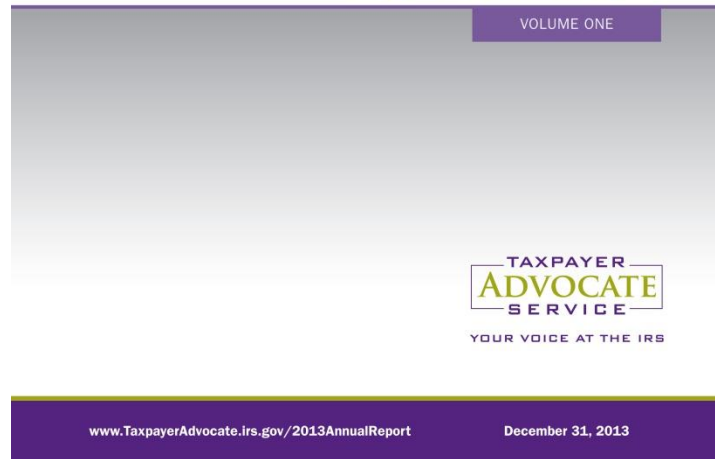


2013 Annual Report to Congress



National Taxpayer Advocate

2013 ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS



VOLUME ONE

TAXPAYER
ADVOCATE
SERVICE

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www.TaxpayerAdvocate.Irs.gov/2013AnnualReport

December 31, 2013

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2013 Annual Report: Most Serious Problems

IRS Desperately Needs More Funding to Serve Taxpayers and Increase Voluntary Compliance

Budget infographic from the ARC
section of the TAS website
www.TaxpayerAdvocate.irs.gov/2013AnnualReport

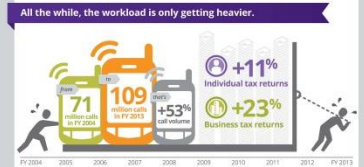
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IRS BUDGET CUTS Harm Taxpayer Service

The IRS has been required to function with fewer resources and a heavier workload, leading to reduced taxpayer services. The National Taxpayer Advocate identified this among the most serious problems facing taxpayers in her 2013 Annual Report to Congress.



The results of IRS budget cuts is just one of the most serious problems facing taxpayers identified by the National Taxpayer Advocate in her 2013 Annual Report to Congress. To read more problems, and see the recommended solutions, please visit taxpayeradvocate.irs.gov/2013AnnualReport.

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2013 Annual Report: Most Serious Problems

The NTA Recommends that Congress:

- Revises budget rules so IRS is “fenced off” from other spending ceilings & IRS viewed as an accounts receivable department
- Funds IRS at level to maximize tax compliance while protecting TP rights & minimizing TP burden
- Allocates IRS resources in a balanced approach to taxpayer service, outreach & education, and effective tax law enforcement



2013 Annual Report: Most Serious Problems

IRS Should Adopt New Approach to ID Theft Victim Assistance that Minimizes Burden & Anxiety for Taxpayers

The Most Serious Problems Facing Taxpayers Today

The National Taxpayer Advocate's 2013 Annual Report to Congress identifies 25 of the most serious problems facing taxpayers and recommends solutions to those problems. The following is one of the most serious problems identified in the report.

A New Approach is Needed for Identity Theft Cases

The current process takes too long and requires victims to interact with multiple IRS units



To read more about this and other most serious problems, as well as recommended solutions, visit taxpayeradvocate.irs.gov/2013AnnualReport.



2013 Annual Report: Most Serious Problems

The National Taxpayer Advocate recommends that the IRS:

- Retain specialized unit as “traffic cop” and single point of contact with victims
- Develop tracking method for how long it takes to resolve ID theft cases
- Implement timeliness measures so cases don’t languish
- Develop database accessible by all functions working on ID theft cases



2013 Annual Report to CONGRESS: More Information

More information available on our website:

www.taxpayeradvocate.irs.gov/2013-Annual-Report



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FY14 Objectives Report

National Taxpayer Advocate's Objectives Report to Congress

Describes key issues, goals, and activities of the Taxpayer Advocate Service for the coming fiscal year

Due June 30 each year

The NTA sends the report to the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Senate Committee on Finance

The Commissioner of the IRS, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Oversight Board do not have prior review or comment



FY14 Objectives Report

Mid-year report identifies priority issues TAS will address in FY 2014, especially:

- Impact of budget cuts on IRS's ability to meet taxpayers' needs
- 83% overall cut in IRS training budget
- IRS's unwillingness to issue full refunds to victims of tax return preparer fraud
- Problems in procedures for helping victims of tax-related identity theft.



FY14 Objectives Report

Special report issued with the Objectives Report:
Political Activity and the Rights of Applicants for Tax-Exempt Status

- Examines IRS use of questionable criteria to screen applicants for IRC § 501(c)(4) tax-exempt status
- Makes preliminary recommendations for changes



FY14 Objectives Report

NTA recommends IRS improve:

- Guidance and transparency
- Checks and balances
- EO management
- EO cultural difficulty with TAS



FY14 Objectives Report

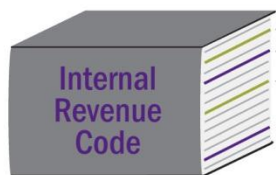
- Recommends Congress enact a Taxpayer Bill of Rights to group taxpayers' existing rights into ten categories
- Details how IRC § 501(c)(4) review process violated eight of the ten rights



FY14 Objectives Report

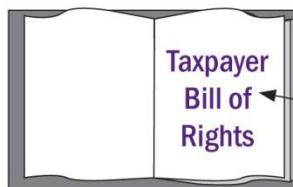
Taxpayer rights and responsibilities

Internal Revenue Code CURRENT



Taxpayer rights featured in many different sections of the Internal Revenue Code

National Taxpayer Advocate's RECOMMENDATION



Taxpayer rights and duties in a formal Taxpayer Bill of Rights in the Internal Revenue Code

National Taxpayer Advocate Fiscal Year 2014 Objectives Report to Congress
www.TaxpayerAdvocate.irs.gov/2014ObjectivesReport



FY14 Objectives Report

“Today, the IRS is an institution in crisis. In my view, however, the real crisis is not the one generating headlines. The real crisis facing the IRS — and therefore taxpayers — is a radically transformed mission coupled with inadequate funding to accomplish that mission. As a consequence of this crisis, the IRS gives limited consideration to taxpayer rights or fundamental tax administration principles as it struggles to get its job done.”



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FY14 Objectives Report

Other key issues for the IRS include:

- Conducting education and outreach to taxpayers about their responsibilities under the Affordable Care Act;
- Resolving erroneous revocations of the tax-exempt status of small IRC § 501(c)(3) organizations; and
- Establishing more reasonable “settlement initiatives” for taxpayers who have overseas financial accounts.



FY14 Objectives Report: More Information

More information available on our website:

www.taxpayeradvocate.irs.gov/2014ObjectivesReport



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Other TAS Programs

Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (TAP)

- Independent panel of citizen volunteers
- Suggest ways to improve IRS
- Contact TAP at 1-888-912-1227 or www.improveirs.org



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Other TAS Programs

Low Income Taxpayer Clinics (LITCs) Assist:

- Low income taxpayers who have a controversy with the IRS
- Taxpayers who speak English as a second language
- Find the nearest location at www.irs.gov/uac/Low-Income-Taxpayer-Clinics



How to Contact TAS

- Fax or phone Local Taxpayer Advocates listed in Publication 1546, *Your Voice at the IRS*
- NTA Case Intake Line: 1-877-777-4778
- [Form 911](http://www.irs.gov) (download): www.irs.gov



Want to Know More?

- Facebook: www.facebook.com/YourVoiceatIRS
- Twitter: www.twitter.com/YourVoiceatIRS
- YouTube: www.youtube.com/TASNTA
- Tax Toolkit: www.TaxpayerAdvocate.irs.gov



Questions?



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6.10.14