

Tax-Aide WA1
Preventing Lost Returns Procedure

| **WA 1 District:** 22
(Enter district number above)

The above listed Tax-Aide district will adhere to the following procedures to account for all returns begun in the TaxSlayer Pro Online Software, with emphasis on preventing lost returns:

Counselor Responsibilities

1. Start with Site Activity Log
 - a. Each counselor will ensure that the taxpayer's name is entered on the Site Activity Log before beginning the return and that their own initials are added to the Log.
2. Mark for Review
 - a. After the counselor completes the first pass of the return, the counselor will mark the return ready for review in TaxSlayer Online (TSO).
3. Mark Complete after Review
 - a. When the quality reviewer completes the review, gathers taxpayer signature(s), and determines that the return is ready to be e-filed, the reviewer will mark the return as complete, approved, and ready to transmit in TSO. The reviewer will also ensure that the reviewer's initials are added to the Log and check off that the taxpayer has signed the 8879.
4. Incomplete Return
 - a. If the counselor or reviewer is unable to complete the return and must send the taxpayer home for more documents or a spouse's signature, the counselor will add relevant tags in TSO (e.g., "WAITING FOR OTHER DOCUMENTS"), and add Notes in TSO and the Log explaining in both places what is needed and when a response is expected.
5. Unable to Complete Return
 - a. If the counselor is aware that Tax-Aide will not be able to complete the return, the counselor will add a relevant tag in TSO (e.g., "OUT OF SCOPE" or "DELETE RETURN") and add Notes in TSO and the Log explaining why.
6. Paper Return
 - a. If the return cannot be filed electronically (for example, MFS with unknown spouse SSN), the counselor will mark the return as a paper return in TSO and the Log and add Notes in both places explaining why.
7. Failed Review
 - a. If the quality reviewer completes the review and determines that the return is not ready to be e-filed because of quality issues and is not able to resolve the issues, the reviewer will mark the return as failed in TSO, select an appropriate

return tag for the reason for failure, and add Notes in TSO and the Log explaining why.

8. E-filing

- a. Any counselor who is preparing to transmit a return will confirm that the return is marked ready to transmit in TSO, check that any notes and flags with open issues have been resolved, check to make sure the Log indicates that taxpayers have signed the 8879, and then transmit the return.

ERO Responsibilities

9. Reviewing Transmissions

- a. During or at the end of a shift, the ERO will review the list of returns in TSO to ensure that all returns marked ready to transmit have been transmitted. If not yet transmitted, they will follow the steps in 8a above before transmitting.
- b. During or at the end of a shift, the ERO will review transmissions in TSO to check for acceptance and update the Log with appropriate notation (including state returns if applicable).
- c. If a return is rejected, the ERO will find out the error and attempt to resolve and retransmit, or mark the return as paper if the resolved return cannot be e-filed and will be mailed. The ERO will add Notes in TSO and the Log with explanation.
- d. If a rejected return cannot be resolved (neither re-transmitted nor mailed in as paper return), then the status should remain as rejected, with Notes in TSO for why the rejection is not resolved.
- e. All returns will be accepted or confirmed as paper/rejected within 48 hours of e-filing, unless there is a delay waiting for taxpayer follow-up.

10. Following up with Taxpayers

- a. The ERO will follow up with taxpayers on any returns that are not filed in a timely manner (or are rejected and need taxpayer information to correct). If a taxpayer does not return to the site/finalize their return within a week of the expected return/finalize date (see #4), the ERO will contact the taxpayer (using both phone and email if available) and encourage them to return/finalize. If the taxpayer does not respond and does not return/finalize their return within two weeks of the expected return/finalize date, the ERO will send them a letter letting them know that their return has not been filed and giving a final date for returning/finalizing the return before it will be deactivated. All notifications will be documented in the Notes in TaxSlayer for the relevant return.

11. Reconciling Site Activity Logs

- a. At appropriate intervals of time depending on volunteer shifts (minimum once a week), the ERO will reconcile the Site Activity Logs with the client list or other reports in TSO, to account for all returns done during that period (including amended returns, prior year returns, and state returns if applicable).
- b. If, at any time a return (including amended and state returns) is discovered as not transmitted within 48 hours of when it should have been, the LC and DC will be notified and the return will be transmitted if eligible, or other appropriate action taken. The DC, in consultation with the LC, will determine the probability that the delay would cause taxpayer concerns, and if so, the DC will notify the

- SC (copy to the ASC) of the circumstances and their recommendation. The SC in consultation with the DC will determine if the situation requires filing an incident report.
- c. Special case for amended returns: Because an amended return may show an accepted status while still in progress because of e-filing the original return, the ERO will review the Log and IRS acknowledgements to confirm that the amendment was filed and accepted in addition to the original return.
 - d. Special case for Washington State Working Families Tax Credit (WFTC): At appropriate intervals of time (minimum once a week), the ERO will review returns to make sure that all Federal returns that are eligible for EIC have an associated WA state return for the WFTC. If they discover a missing WA return, they will work with the relevant tax counselor to file the WA return, and inform the taxpayer. If unable to file the WA return electronically, they will contact the taxpayer and offer assistance for mailing in the application or completing online.

LC Responsibilities

12. Deactivating Returns and Auditing Status

- a. At the end of the season, all returns not transmitted must have a clear explanation in TaxSlayer Notes and in the Log of the steps taken and reason why the return should be "Deactivated." LCs will have final responsibility for making sure that all returns not completed by the end of tax season are deactivated.
- b. At the end of the season, LCs will confirm that all client lists or management reports in TSO for current and all available prior years have been reviewed to make sure no returns are left in "In Progress," "Ready to Transmit," "Transmitted," or "Rejected" status (except Rejected returns that have Note explaining why the rejection cannot be resolved). All returns should be "Accepted," "Paper," "Deactivated," or "Rejected" (including explanation in Notes for "Paper," "Deactivated," and "Rejected" returns).
- c. If an un-transmitted return is discovered, follow the actions in 11b, above.
- d. At the end of the season, LCs will confirm that all Federal returns that are eligible for EIC have an associated WA state return for the WFTC. If not, follow the actions in 11d, above.

DC Responsibilities

13. Reviewing across sites and years

- a. At the end of the season, the DC will confirm that client lists or management reports in TSO have been reviewed for each site in the district, and for current year and all available prior years, to ensure that that all returns have been either successfully e-filed, marked as paper returns, rejected returns (with explanation why rejection was not resolved), or deactivated.
- b. If a Potential Lost Return is discovered, the DC will investigate, consulting with the LC/ERO as needed, and determine if the return should have been transmitted or was for some good reason not transmitted. If the former, the DC will notify the SC immediately as described in 11b, above, and take all necessary steps to complete the return.