



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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COUNTY PROVIDES TAX ASSISTANCE TO FAMILIES *Campaign Continues Through April 15*

The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA), in conjunction with the Countywide Earned Income Tax Credit Coalition, continues to provide no cost tax assistance at 80 sites throughout the county.

About 600 volunteers will continue to file income tax returns at no cost for low-income families through April 15 as part of HHSA's 2009 Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Campaign.

"These are difficult economic times. I encourage low-income families to take advantage of this great service," said Pam Slater-Price, Vice Chairwoman of County Board of Supervisors. "By filing an income tax return and claiming the money they've earned, they will not only help themselves, but also the local economy."

Established in 1975, the EITC is the federal government's largest cash assistance program designed to lift low-income families and individuals out of poverty by helping them keep more of their hard-earned wages.

However, the IRS estimates that about 20 to 25 percent of eligible individuals don't claim the credit.

In 2003 the San Diego County Board of Supervisors launched a pilot program to provide no cost tax preparation assistance to low-income workers. The program was expanded countywide the following year.

Since the initiative began, more than 52,000 state and federal returns have been filed and more than 23.5 million EITC dollars have been returned to the regional economy.

Individuals and families who worked in 2008 and earned less than \$12,880 and \$41,646 respectively could qualify for as much as \$4,824 in tax credit. However, they must file a tax return to qualify for the EITC.

"This is an important opportunity for working families and individuals to recoup their hard-earned money. You worked hard for it. Claim it," said Nick Macchione, HHSA Director.

For more information about the EITC Campaign or to set up an appointment to file a tax return, call 211.

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