



Catholic Charities of California

VITA

COALITION 2012

Catholic Charities Agencies provide **free tax services** and **referrals** for low-income taxpayers. We can help you:

- File your taxes;
- Claim the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), and other tax credits; and
- Find other free financial services.



Photo courtesy of Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County.

VITA

Free, easy tax help provided in convenient locations by trusted Catholic Charities staff and volunteers!

Catholic Charities VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) Programs offer free tax return help to low- to moderate-income (generally, \$49,000 and below) people.

Certified volunteers prepare basic tax returns at Catholic Charities offices and other convenient community locations during tax season (January – April).

Catholic Charities VITA sites offer free electronic filing of tax returns. Some agencies also offer:

- Assistance with ITIN (obtaining an Individual Tax Identification Number for individuals who do not have a social security number but need to file a tax return);
- Opening checking and savings accounts;
- Enrolling in Individual Development Accounts; and
- Other financial education and asset building services.

EITC

EITC rewards low-income workers, lifts Californians out of poverty, and stimulates the economy!

EITC is a federal refundable tax credit that is designed to lower the tax burden on low-income individuals and families, while incentivizing work and stimulating local economies. The EITC is recognized as the federal government's most effective anti-poverty program.

"The EITC helps to lift millions of Californians out of poverty each year," shares Shannon Lahey, Executive Director of Catholic Charities of California United.

"By increasing the number of Californians who utilize the EITC, we can help working households in need while stimulating the state's economy, including generating revenues to offset the state's budget crisis and creating jobs that we so desperately need."

Each year, an estimated eight hundred thousand Californians leave \$1.2 billion dollars in tax credits unclaimed—tax refunds that if spent in the state could generate \$1.4 billion in sales and 8,200 jobs.

Note: Data from the New America Foundation report, Left on the Table, 2010.

How much is the EITC?

This year, EITC has been expanded to provide relief to families most impacted by the recession. For example:

- A family with three or more qualifying children that earns less than \$48,362 is eligible to receive a refund up to \$5,666;

- A single qualifying worker between the ages of 25-64 with no children and earning less than \$13,460 can receive up to \$457.

What do I need to qualify for the EITC?

To qualify for the EITC, you must be a working U.S. citizen and a legal resident with a Social Security number.

How do I claim my EITC?

To claim the EITC you must file a tax return. For assistance filing a tax return, contact a VITA service provider using the information below.

How can I get free help with my taxes?

Catholic Charities offices across California provide free help with taxes (VITA services) or referrals to other community organizations that provide VITA services.

Or **call 1-800-906-9887** or check this partial [VITA site list](#) online. (This list does not include every VITA site.)