



Women's Center for Education and Career Advancement Self-Sufficiency Program

BENEFIT UPDATES

March 2009



Free Tax Help for Your Clients

Your clients may be eligible to have their taxes prepared for free by a knowledgeable tax preparer if they have dependent children and their income is under \$45,000 (\$40k at some sites), or if they don't have dependent children and their income is under \$20,000.

For site locations, call 311 or go to:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/ofe/html/poverty/taxassistance.shtml>

See the "Tax Help" page in the Calculator for more information.

Clients Can Get up to \$6,512 in the Earned Income Tax Credit!

Working individuals and families may be eligible for thousands of dollars through the EITC, even if they don't owe taxes or have to file a tax return. They may also be eligible for the child tax credit and child & dependent care credit.

See the "Tax Credits" page in the Calculator for more information on tax credits.

Clients Can Get \$300+ through the Recovery Rebate Credit!

If your clients didn't receive last year's Economic Stimulus Payment (ESP), they have another chance to claim it through this year's Recovery Rebate Credit. They may also be eligible for the Recovery Rebate Credit if they didn't receive the full amount of the ESP and their circumstances have changed in the last year. To be eligible for the ESP, they must have had at least \$3,000 in income from earnings, Social Security benefits, SSD (SSI doesn't count as income for this credit), Veterans Disability benefits, Railroad Retirement benefits, or a combination of these. This is available for anyone, including low-income seniors and others with disabilities, who may not be required to file taxes. Clients may be eligible for the Recovery Rebate Credit if they meet any of the following criteria:

- You were eligible for the Economic Stimulus Payment, but you didn't file a 2007 tax return;
- You received less than the maximum Economic Stimulus Payment in 2008 (\$600 per taxpayer or \$1,200 if married filing jointly) because your income was too high or too low, but your circumstances changed in the last year;
- You didn't have a qualifying child in 2007, but you had one in 2008;
- You could be claimed as a dependent on someone else's tax return in 2007, but not in 2008; or
- You didn't have a valid Social Security number in 2007, but you received one in 2008.

Clients can claim the Recovery Rebate Credit by filing a 2008 federal tax return (Form 1040, 1040A or 1040EZ). For more info, call the IRS at 1-800-829-1040 or go to <http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=186065,00.html> or go to the CBPP webpage at <http://www.cbpp.org/eic2009/>

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Extension for Emergency Unemployment Insurance (UI) Benefits

Your clients may be eligible for a new 13-week extension of emergency UI. Applicants must meet the requirements for regular UI and have already received their full amount of regular UI benefits. Emergency benefits will be available for the week starting February 22, 2009 and through the week ending May 30, 2010. Your clients must claim their first week of emergency benefits by the week ending December 27, 2009. Note: This is an additional 13 weeks of federally funded emergency benefits, for a total of 33 weeks of emergency benefits. See the "Unemployment Information" page in the Calculator for more details.

Recent federal legislation will provide an additional \$25 weekly payment to unemployment recipients (the current maximum weekly benefit is \$405). These payments are expected to begin in late March 2009, retroactive to the week ending March 1, 2009. The last week for which additional payments can be made is the week ending July 4, 2010. Recipients will not need to take additional action in order to receive these payments. We will keep you updated as details become available, or for more information, go to: <https://ui.labor.state.ny.us/UBC/home.do>

Immigrants' Guide to Public Benefits

The NYC Public Advocate recently published a report on public benefits for immigrants in a variety of languages. To access a copy of the report, call 212-669-7250 or go to: www.pubadvocate.nyc.gov/PublicBenefitsGuide.htm

New Benefits & Tax Credit Flyers!

Be sure to download updated flyers on our website, including:

- How the EITC Affects Eligibility for Other Public Benefits (revised 2/09)
- Unemployment Insurance Facts (revised 3/09)
- SSI/SSD: A Comparative Guide (revised 1/09)
- Common Countable Assets Chart (for PA, FS, MA) (revised 1/09)

To access these flyers, go to:

<http://www.wceca.org/sufficiency.html>



The Women's Center sends out periodic email alerts about Calculator and public benefits updates. If you would like to receive these alerts, please send an email request to sellsufficiency@wceca.org or call 212-964-8934.

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