



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew J. Lanza

## Senator Lanza Announces Opening of 80 New Free Tax Assistance Sites

ANDREW J LANZA March 3, 2015

### ***Expanded Program Offers More Than 900 Free Sessions Statewide, Targets Assistance to Low-Income New Yorkers***

Senator Andrew Lanza recently announced the launch of a greatly-expanded network of free tax filing assistance sites across New York. The State is offering 942 free sessions to New Yorkers – a 400 percent increase over last year – at 80 locations statewide. Each site is staffed by State Department of Taxation and Finance tax experts who are available to assist low-income New Yorkers with electronically filing their 2014 taxes.

"By helping hard-working families and individuals file their taxes, we're ensuring that more people can get their taxes done on time and accurately," Senator Lanza said. "We want to help cut down on confusion – and by enhancing free access at dozens of key assistance centers across the state, more families and individuals can maximize their refund."

The free tax preparation service is available to New York individuals and families who earned less than \$60,000 in 2014. Appointments are recommended, but walk-ins are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Select sites offer staff who can speak foreign languages including Chinese, Spanish or Russian. The list of tax sites including those with foreign language assistance and session dates can be viewed [HERE](#).

More than 70 percent of New York taxpayers hire tax preparers, often costing hundreds of dollars per filing. This is cost prohibitive to low-income residents filing taxes and attempting to maximize their refund. By offering this service free of charge, more New Yorkers can effectively fulfill their tax responsibilities while maximizing their household's possible tax refund.

Department of Taxation and Finance Executive Deputy Commissioner Nonie Manion said, "To support taxpayers

statewide, we have more than 200 employee volunteers helping New Yorkers do their taxes accurately and at no cost. Not only do taxpayers prepare their taxes for free, but they'll learn how to do it themselves for future years."

Centro Civico Executive Director Ladan Alomar said, "This is about helping low-income individuals and families with one of their most important financial transactions of the year. Free tax assistance is another critical service we can provide for the community."

Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance Executive Deputy Commissioner Sharon Devine said, "Another tremendous benefit of free tax assistance sites is that they help ensure that eligible taxpayers—especially those with low incomes—receive every tax credit they deserve. These credits, including the Earned Income Tax Credit, can provide families and individuals with thousands of dollars, and have a tremendous impact on their financial well-being."

Locations for the State's free electronic filing assistance may also be found by calling the Department of Taxation and Finance at 518-457-5181.

The IRS and AARP additionally offer a directory of certified volunteers at 800-plus sites to assist in tax preparation for taxpayers uncomfortable using a computer. The free service is available to individuals and families earning \$53,000 or less. A list of preparers is available [here](#).

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