

Before You Hire a Tax Preparer

- 01 Find out about the tax preparer's qualifications, such as education and experience.
- 02 Make sure you know how much each tax preparation service—including each IRS tax form and other work, will cost.
- 03 Make sure the tax preparer gives you a written estimate of all fees before the tax preparer provides any services.
- 04 Make sure you get a written agreement outlining services to be provided.

When Your Return is Completed:

Review the entire return before you sign and ask questions if needed; Make sure your preparer signs the return; and

You are entitled to get all of your papers back, including copies of all final returns, without any extra charge.

All disclosures must be provided in English or Spanish, based on your preference.

Todas las divulgaciones deben proporcionarse en inglés o español, según su preferencia.

Free Tax Preparation Services

You may file your federal taxes for free through the IRS website, irs.gov/freefile.

There are many nonprofit organizations, such as Volunteer Income Tax Assistance programs (VITA), that offer free tax preparation:

- CNM Tax Help New Mexico (cnm.edu/depts/taxhelp)
- AARP Foundation Tax-Aide (aarpfoundation.org/taxaide)

For additional organizations, visit cabq.gov/taxprerights.

To file a complaint about a tax preparer, visit cabq.gov/taxprerights or call 311



UNSPASH / STELLWEB. COVER: UNSPLASH / KELLY SIKKEMA

FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION, VISIT
[CABQ.GOV/TAXPRERIGHTS](http://cabq.gov/taxprerights).

THE CITY OF
ALBUQUERQUE

Consumer Bill of Rights for Paid Personal Income Tax Preparation Services

**Know Your Rights Before You Hire
a Tax Preparer**

Tax preparers must provide a copy of and review this brochure before you sign any agreement. They are required to provide specific disclosures about costs and services.

Top Three Things a Tax Preparer Should NOT Do

A tax preparer should never do any of the following:

01 A preparer should never prepare your return without reviewing your records.

02 A preparer should never ask you to sign:

- a blank return;
- an incomplete return;
- a return with false information on it; or
- a return with information that you do not understand.

03 A preparer should never guarantee that:

- you'll receive a tax refund; or
- you won't be audited by the IRS or the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department (NMTRD).

Key Tax Credits

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and NM's Working Tax Credit (WTC) help low-income taxpayers receive money as a refund even if your income is too low to pay taxes.

Make sure the tax preparer has taken these credits into consideration when preparing your taxes.



Beware of Refund Anticipation Loans (RAL) or Refund Anticipation Checks (RAC)

Tax preparers **cannot** require you to take out a **Refund Anticipation Loan (RAL)**, **Refund Anticipation Check (RAC)**, or other similar products.

Tax preparers must provide additional loan and cost disclosures if you choose one of these products.

These products let you delay payment for tax preparation services. The tax preparer takes their fees out of your refund.

What's a Refund Anticipation Loan?

A Refund Anticipation Loan is a loan from a lender that you must pay back with interest and perhaps fees, and will be based on the value of your tax refund.

It may be marketed as a way to get your

refund faster, but it is an expensive way to get your refund faster.

What's a Refund Anticipation Check?

A Refund Anticipation Check is a check or payment allowing you to get your refund in advance of the refund.

The tax preparer may set up a temporary bank account and ask the IRS to send your refund to that account.

The tax preparer will have access to the account and the tax preparers will deduct fees from your tax refund before they give the remaining money to you.

If you use the Refund Anticipation Check to delay paying the tax preparer, such as receiving a prepaid credit card before your tax return, you may lose a large amount of your tax refund due to high interest rates and additional fees.