

# CAP and AARP team up to offer free, local tax help

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Lower Columbia Community Action Program (CAP) and trained AARP Tax Aide volunteers will provide free tax assistance to filers of all ages and incomes from Jan. 15th through April 18th.

Once again this year, CAP and AARP are encouraging people to claim the Earned Income Tax Credit, which is a tax break for qualifying people who work but have low wages.

"Many workers are eligible for this tax credit and don't know it," according to Liz Myntti, program manager at CAP's Financial Independence Center.

She encourages individuals who earned less than \$43,352, and couples who earned less than \$48,362, to see if they qualify. Taxpayers do not have to have children to claim the Earned Income Tax Credit, she added.

This year AARP tax aides will be at three sites in the area: from 12:30 to 4:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays at Longview Public Library; from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays at Lower Columbia CAP, 1526 Commerce Ave, Longview; and from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesdays at the Fibre Federal Credit Union administration building on Douglas Street and Commerce Avenue.

Participants should bring photo identification; Social Security cards for themselves, their spouse and dependents, or Social Security number verification letters issued by the Social Security Administration; birth dates for all persons listed on the tax return; wage and earning statement, Forms W-2, W-2G and 1099-R, from all employers; interest and dividend statements from banks (Forms 1099); copies of last year's federal and state returns, if available; bank routing and account numbers for direct deposit of their refunds into checking and savings accounts or on prepaid debit cards; amounts paid for day care, if applicable and the day care provider's identifying number; and other relevant information about income and expenses.

Help is also available from 8 a.m. to noon and 1 to 3 p.m. weekdays at CAP for people who are interested in self-filing. Computers and a tax specialist will be available to assist people. Those seeking help are encouraged to call first to make an appointment at 360-425-3430, extension 248.

In addition, CAP and members of the Cowlitz Assets Building Coalition are hosting "Super Refund Saturday" from 12:30 to 4:30 p.m. Jan. 29 at the Longview Public Library. Refreshments, information and resources on asset-building will be provided during the event.

For more information, call CAP's Financial Information Center at 360-425-3430, extension 248.