



Consumer Affairs Tabloid



Keeping you in the "KNOW"

287- CITY

Army Community Service Financial Readiness Branch

January 2009

Fort Hood Tax Center

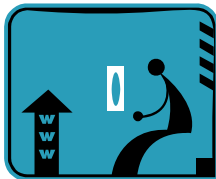


The Fort Hood Tax Center (FHTC) offers **FREE** tax preparation for your state and federal tax returns, to include electronic filing of federal returns and automatic bank deposit. The FHTC is co-located with the Clear Creek Commissary, building 50001, on Clear Creek Road and has its own entrance at the front of the building, to the right of the commissary entrance.

The FHTC will be open from 20 Jan - 24 Apr 2009. Hours of operation will be 0900-1600, Mon - Fri. The FHTC will be closed on Saturday, Sunday, and federal holidays, but open on training holidays.

The FHTC provides assistance on a **walk-in basis** during normal business hours. On days with unusually high traffic walk-ins may be stopped prior to the close of business to ensure completion of all clients' returns that business day. **Appointments** are available for any client by calling 287-3294. Appointments will only be made for the week in which a call requesting an appointment is made. Appointments are also available for Colonels and above, Sergeants Major, Commanders, First Sergeants, and FCC providers during normal business hours by calling the Post Tax Officer at 288-5302 or the Post Tax Coordinator at 288-5040.

The FHTC has an EZ drop off program at the bldg 50001 and bldg 4617. If you qualify to file a 1040EZ, you can come in, fill out our questionnaire and go through the screening process, come back to the same location after 48 hours and sign your completed return. To file a 1040EZ your filing status must be single or married filing jointly, have no dependents, you and spouse are under 65 and not blind, only have income from wages, unemployment, and interest, and have less than \$100,000 in taxable income.



Excerpt from: **Military OneSource**

Military OneSource Tax Filing Services www.militaryonesource.com

Military OneSource will be providing tax filing services for the 2008 tax season beginning January 19, 2009. Our services will include free online tax filing services (both state and federal), and free telephonic tax consultations.

The following are eligible:

- US Army, Navy, Airforce, and Marine Active duty, Guard and Reserve (regardless of activation status). **(NOTE: United States Coast Guard personnel, spouses and dependent children are not eligible for this service. USCG should contact their local [VITA/Legal Office](#).)**
- Spouses and dependent children of the Services noted above, and who are authorized in DEERS
- A Family member who is taking care of the affairs of a service member (in one of the Services noted above) when the service member is deployed
- A severely injured service member of one of the Services noted above, or a designated Family member of a severely injured member who is incapable of handling his or her own affairs



Excerpt from: Internal Revenue Service

Tax Information for Members of the U.S. Armed Forces www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=97273,00.html

The tax laws provide some special benefits for active members of the U.S. Armed Forces, including those serving in combat zones.

For federal tax purposes, the U.S. Armed Forces includes officers and enlisted personnel in all regular and reserve units controlled by the Secretaries of Defense, the Army, Navy and Air Force. The Coast Guard is also included, but not the U.S. Merchant Marine or the American Red Cross. However, these and other support personnel may qualify for certain tax deadline extensions because of their service in a combat zone.

This website includes links to forms and publications such as Publication 3, Armed Forces' Tax Guide, scams that target the military, tax assistance for military Families, and frequently asked questions.

Free File Home – Your Link to Free Online Filing www.irs.gov/efile/article/0,,id=118986,00.html

Please access this website to see if you qualify for free e-filing service through the IRS

From the Files of Fort Hood's Consumer Affairs Office



Instant Tax Refunds – Warnings, Cautions, and Scams

“Fast cash, tax refund given on the spot”

Sounds easy but what's the real deal? More than likely this is a Tax Refund Anticipation Loan. That's RIGHT it's a loan, even when you use a major tax preparation company. Besides paying a fee, you're taking a risk. In some cases you might not qualify for the instant refund or they will only give you a partial amount up front. If they make a mistake or the IRS is garnishing your pay for back child support, taxes, or student loans, you will be required to pay the difference back.

Another Catch: 'The Military Lending Act' prevents lenders (the company providing you with the money up front) from charging more than 36% "Military Annual Percentage Rate," (MAPR) to service members and their Families. The MAPR describes the total cost of a loan, expressed as an annualized percentage rate and includes all fees and additional charges associated with the loan.

“File your taxes with us and use your refund to buy a car or furniture”

Not only is this a loan but it's also considered a down payment. Remember deposits are non refundable. If you change your mind you lose your tax refund. Don't limit your options! File your taxes for free at the tax office and shop around for the best deal.

Fake emails or correspondence – Be cautious about any emails or letters from a bank or IRS asking for your social security number. Identity thieves use this ploy to obtain your information and steal your identity. Do not give out your information or click on any links in the email. Contact your bank or the IRS to verify the validity of the request.

Back issues of the Consumer Affairs Tabloid are available on the Financial Readiness section of the ACS website at www.hoodmwr.com/acs.