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The Internal Revenue Service is reminding federal tax return preparers that they must renew their Preparer Tax Identification Numbers (PTIN) that expire Dec. 31, 2017.

Dec. 20, 2017

The Internal Revenue Service is reminding federal tax return preparers that they must renew their Preparer Tax Identification Numbers (PTIN) that expire Dec. 31, 2017.

Anyone who prepares or helps prepare any federal tax return, or claim for refund for compensation, must have a valid 2018 PTIN from the IRS. The PTIN must be used as the identifying number on returns prepared. Failure to have and use a valid PTIN may result in penalties.

For those who have a 2017 PTIN, the renewal process takes a few moments online. Preparers can get started at www.irs.gov/ptin. If registering for the first time, the PTIN application may also be completed online. There is no fee for obtaining or renewing a PTIN. Paper applications and renewals take four to six weeks to process.

Enrolled agents, regardless of whether they prepare returns, must also have a PTIN to maintain their status.

Annual Filing Season Program Participation

The IRS is also reminding tax preparers who have taken courses to increase their knowledge and improve their filing season readiness that doing so may have made them eligible for the IRS [Annual Filing Season Program](#).

This voluntary program is for tax return preparers with 18 hours of continuing education (CE) in basic tax filing issues and updates, ethics, as well as other federal tax law courses. This week, the IRS is sending emails to about 5,000 tax return preparers who only need a few more CE courses to participate for 2018. However,

they only have until Dec. 31 to get the classes they need. An easy way to earn

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