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Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the [American Institute of CPAs \(AICPA\)](#) continuously urged actions by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to address taxpayer service challenges worsened by the pandemic. As it stands, the backlog of unprocessed mail, returns and adjustments at the IRS has reached a critical stage that is adversely impacting taxpayers and tax practitioners.

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endorsed by the AICPA, stating,

"...we believe that the IRS must take additional steps to improve customer service issues, decrease processing delays, and work-down the backlog of paper returns and correspondence by continuing the maximum use of overtime and surge teams, as well as the continued suspension of automated notices and collections—which have been critical in reducing pandemic-related tax return and correspondence backlogs. Additionally, the IRS must improve its recruitment and retention efforts to adequately address the backlog and increase levels of taxpayer service."

The letter from Congress cited a [report](#) by the National Taxpayer Advocate stating that the paper return backlog increased by 1.3 million from the same point as last year and that the IRS was only able to meet 12 percent of its hiring goals for customer service representatives.

The two letters deliver similar messages to the IRS: Take steps now to reduce the backlog and improve service to taxpayers and practitioners ahead of the 2023 tax season. "It's important for the IRS to take immediate steps to prevent another stressful and confusing tax season for taxpayers, practitioners and the IRS," said AICPA Vice President of Tax Policy and Advocacy, Edward Karl. "Until the backlog is truly at a healthy level and the IRS' service deficiencies are corrected, taxpayers and practitioners will continue to be unfairly and unnecessarily burdened. The common-sense steps that AICPA and Congress have urged the IRS to take now would give the Service some much-needed breathing room ahead of the next filing season."

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