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## Says IRS

Taxpayers usually have three years to file and claim their tax refunds. If they don't file within three years, the money becomes the property of the U.S. Treasury.

Isaac M. O'Bannon • Apr. 12, 2023



The Internal Revenue Service says that nearly 1.5 million people across the nation (state-by-state list below) have unclaimed refunds for tax year 2019 but face a July 17 deadline to submit their tax return.

**The IRS estimates almost \$1.5 billion in refunds remain unclaimed** because people haven't filed their 2019 tax returns yet. The average median refund is \$893 for this year, and the IRS has done a special state-by-state calculation to show how many people are potentially eligible for these refunds.

“The 2019 tax returns came due during the pandemic, and many people may have

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But for 2019 tax returns, people have more time than usual to file to claim their refunds. Usually, the normal filing deadline to claim old refunds falls around the April tax deadline, which is April 18 this year for 2022 tax returns. But the three-year window for 2019 unfiled returns was postponed to July 17, 2023, due to the COVID-19 pandemic emergency. The IRS issued [Notice 2023-21](#) on Feb. 27, 2023, providing legal guidance on claims made by the postponed deadline.

The IRS estimates the midpoint for the potential unclaimed refunds for 2019 to be \$893. That means half of the refunds are more than \$893 and half are less.

“With the pandemic taking place when the 2019 tax returns were originally due, people faced extremely unusual situations. People may have simply forgotten about tax refunds with the deadline that year postponed all the way into July,” Werfel said. “We frequently see students, part-time workers and others with little income overlook filing a tax return and never realize they may be owed a refund. We encourage people to review their records and start gathering records now, so they don’t run the risk of missing the July deadline.”

By missing out on filing a tax return, people stand to lose more than just their refund of taxes withheld or paid during 2019. Many low- and moderate-income workers may be eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). For 2019, the credit was worth as much as \$6,557. The EITC helps individuals and families whose incomes are below certain thresholds in 2019. Those who are potentially eligible for EITC in 2019 had incomes below:

- \$50,162 (\$55,952 if married filing jointly) for those with three or more qualifying children;
- \$46,703 (\$52,493 if married filing jointly) for people with two qualifying children;
- \$41,094 (\$46,884 if married filing jointly) for those with one qualifying child, and;
- \$15,570 (\$21,370 if married filing jointly) for people without qualifying children.

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## get key documents

Although it's been several years since 2019, the IRS reminds taxpayers there are ways they can still gather the information they need to file this tax return. But people should start early to make sure they have enough time to file before the July deadline for 2019 refunds. Here are some options:

- **Request copies of key documents:** Taxpayers who are missing Forms W-2, 1098, 1099 or 5498 for the years 2019, 2020 or 2021 can request copies from their employer, bank or other payers.
- **Use Get Transcript Online at IRS.gov.** Taxpayers who are unable to get those missing forms from their employer or other payers can order a free wage and income transcript at IRS.gov using the [Get Transcript Online](#) tool. For many taxpayers, this is by far the quickest and easiest option.
- **Or request a transcript.** Another option is for people to file [Form 4506-T](#) with the IRS to request a "wage and income transcript." A wage and income transcript shows data from information returns received by the IRS, such as Forms W-2, 1099, 1098, Form 5498 and IRA contribution information. Taxpayers can use the information from the transcript to file their tax return. But plan ahead – these written requests can take several weeks; people are strongly urged to try the other options first.

Based on tax information currently available, the IRS estimated how many people in each state may be entitled to a tax refund. The actual refund amount will vary based on a household's tax situation.

## State-by-state estimates of individuals who may be due 2019 income tax refunds

State or	Estimated Number of	Median	Total Potential
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California	144,700	\$856	\$141,780,000
Colorado	30,100	\$859	\$29,514,000
Connecticut	15,400	\$934	\$16,198,400
Delaware	5,700	\$880	\$5,754,900
District of Columbia	4,400	\$887	\$4,550,100
Florida	89,300	\$893	\$89,530,400
Georgia	48,000	\$826	\$46,269,000
Hawaii	8,800	\$932	\$9,197,700
Idaho	7,600	\$758	\$6,996,000
Illinois	55,800	\$916	\$57,591,300
Indiana	31,700	\$916	\$32,115,100
Iowa	15,300	\$926	\$15,492,600
Kansas	14,600	\$913	\$14,753,700
Kentucky	18,600	\$906	\$18,574,200
Louisiana	22,000	\$877	\$22,274,800
Maine	6,400	\$876	\$6,197,300

State or	Estimated Number of	Median	Total Potential
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Mississippi	12,300	\$820	\$11,836,700
Missouri	31,800	\$880	\$31,345,700
Montana	5,200	\$854	\$5,144,900
Nebraska	7,800	\$893	\$7,745,600
Nevada	15,800	\$869	\$15,550,300
New Hampshire	6,900	\$974	\$7,451,800
New Jersey	40,500	\$924	\$42,035,900
New Mexico	9,600	\$867	\$9,522,400
New York	81,600	\$945	\$86,826,200
North Carolina	45,800	\$862	\$44,426,600
North Dakota	3,700	\$958	\$3,997,100
Ohio	51,800	\$868	\$50,234,900
Oklahoma	21,400	\$897	\$21,770,000
Oregon	23,700	\$801	\$22,348,900
Pennsylvania	56,000	\$924	\$57,572,600



State or	Estimated Number of	Median	Total Potential
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Tennessee	28,100	\$873	\$27,623,700
Texas	135,300	\$924	\$142,235,200
Utah	11,700	\$845	\$11,198,400
Vermont	3,100	\$901	\$3,036,600
Virginia	42,200	\$869	\$42,110,500
Washington	42,400	\$934	\$44,823,200
West Virginia	6,500	\$959	\$6,818,900
Wisconsin	21,000	\$834	\$20,003,100
Wyoming	3,300	\$949	\$3,534,800
Totals	1,469,000	\$893	\$1,479,913,400

\* Excluding credits.

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