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close to 9% lower than at that point last year.

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By Dave Eisenstadter, masslive.com (TNS)

With this year's tax filing deadline approaching, IRS reporting continues to show **millions fewer refunds this year compared with last year.**

Records obtained from the IRS show that this year's tax season is on track to have the fewest refunds in at least 15 years.

As of the week ending March 15, the [most recent data available](#), the IRS had issued

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That number fell short of historical averages. From 2009 through 2021, between 70% and 80% of tax filers got refunds.

Because of a vast array of factors going into the number of returns and refunds that are issued, an IRS spokesman who supplied MassLive with the data declined to speculate on the reasons behind the reduction.

“All of our systems are working and the volumes of returns we’re receiving are on par for what we would expect considering the shortened filing season and the vagaries of the calendar,” the spokesperson said.

This year’s tax filing season started later than last year’s, but the number of refunds has not kept pace with the number of returns filed. While there have been about 900,000 fewer returns processed by March 15 than a similar date in 2023, there have been nearly 4.8 million fewer tax refunds issued in the same range.

There is still time for the number of tax funds to catch up. The tax deadline is April 15 for most taxpayers, and April 17 for those in Massachusetts and Maine due to the Patriots’ Day holiday. Additionally, late tax returns are accepted throughout the year.

The gap has closed in the past two weeks of reporting. For the week ending in March 1, there were nearly 6 million fewer refunds issued compared with about 4.8 million fewer reported by the week ending March 15.

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