

Working Abroad? File Your Taxes Right

If you are an American citizen who's living and working abroad, you may not be aware of exactly how to file your taxes. You may not even be aware that the US government and the IRS actually require that you [file your taxes](#), even if you're outside of the country. Although it is a different process, it's certainly a better option than not filing at all because it's quite simple and you can steer clear of serious IRS issues.

Numerous people believe that they're exempted from paying and filing their taxes if they reside abroad. This is not true, however. Regardless of where you are residing, you are required to file your tax returns as an American citizen to avoid IRS issues.

IRS Form 2555-EZ and the Foreign Earned Income form, or Form 2555, are 2 types of tax forms that citizens residing and working in another country are required to use. In order to completely qualify and be able to utilize either of these two forms, the taxpayer needs to be a citizen of the United States of America, or even a resident of the United States, but working in a foreign country.

Like everyone else, you'll need to file your tax return on the 15th of April every year. However, a 2-month extension is automatically offered for American citizens residing in another country. This would provide you more time to correctly file the appropriate forms and pay outstanding [tax debts](#). To use this two-month extension, you will have to attach a statement to confirm that you qualify for it.

An issue that faces people who have recently moved to another country is that they did not receive W-2 forms from their employers because they were sent to their old address; hence, losing their tax information. It is your duty to get those documents. Whether that takes asking a good friend or family member to find your mail, or requesting your company to send a new copy to your new address, it must be accomplished. Another option is having the official copies sent through the regular mail while electronic copies are sent to you through email. This will allow you to accomplish your tax returns in a timely manner and prevent an IRS problem.

You have a few options in how to file your tax return if your spouse isn't an American citizen. One of those options is to file as Married Filing Separately. This means that you, as a taxpayer, would only report your own income that you've made for that year. However, you can file under the Head of Household status if you have children and provide more than half of each child's support. Lastly, you can choose to identify your spouse as a resident alien as a third option. You would actually be filing as Married Filing Jointly for tax reasons.

When filing taxes from overseas, it is best to consult a [tax professional](#). With the various aspects involved, this is the best way to avoid IRS problems.