

## Sample of Email Message Regarding VITA Program Services

From: Federal Student Aid  
Subject: Federal Student Aid Tax Tip - Free Tax Preparation

Dear [Applicant],

You are receiving this message because you provided tax information on the FAFSA you filed last year, and Federal Student Aid, in partnership with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), is seeking to share information about the free tax preparation services available to you.

If you plan to file a tax return for 2012, you may be able to file through the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program that offers free tax help for qualifying taxpayers. Through the IRS's VITA program, you can take advantage of traditional face-to-face tax preparation with an IRS-certified volunteer or you can use the facilitated self-assistance service where you prepare and file your own tax return with access to an IRS-certified volunteer if you have questions.

For both services, the VITA Program generally offers this free tax help to people who make \$51,000 or less and need assistance in preparing their own tax returns. IRS-certified volunteers provide free basic income tax return preparation and can inform taxpayers about special tax credits for which they may qualify, such as Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit.

VITA sites are generally located at community and neighborhood centers, libraries, schools, shopping malls, and other convenient locations. Most locations also offer free electronic filing. To find a VITA location near you that offers self-assistance tax preparation or traditional face-to-face tax preparation, go to <http://irs.treasury.gov/freetaxprep/>.

For general information about the VITA program, visit <http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/Free-Tax-Return-Preparation-for-You-by-Volunteers>. For more information about Federal Student Aid, visit [StudentAid.gov](http://StudentAid.gov).

Thank you,

U.S. Department of Education

Federal Student Aid

## Sample of Email Message Regarding VITA Program Services

From: Federal Student Aid  
Subject: Federal Student Aid Tax Tip – Getting a Refund

Dear [Applicant],

You are receiving this message because you recently filed a FAFSA, and Federal Student Aid, in partnership with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), is seeking to share information about tax benefits and the free tax preparation services available to you.

The IRS wants to let you know that you may want to file a tax return even if you aren't required to because you may receive a refund. Here are a few examples of how you could qualify for a refund:

- You should file to get money back if your employer withheld federal income tax from your pay.
- You may qualify for an Earned income Tax Credit (EITC) if you worked, but did not earn a lot of money.
- You may qualify for an Additional Child Tax Credit if you have at least one qualifying child and you did not get the full amount of the Child Tax Credit.
- Students in their first four years of postsecondary education may qualify for as much as \$2,500 through the American Opportunity Credit. Forty percent of the credit is refundable so even those who owe no tax can get up to \$1,000 of the credit as cash back for each eligible student.

And to make it even easier, you don't need to pay to file your taxes. You can file a 2012 tax return through the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program that offers free tax help for qualifying taxpayers. Through the IRS's VITA program, you can take advantage of traditional face-to-face tax preparation with an IRS-certified volunteer or you can use the facilitated self-assistance service where you prepare and file your own tax return with access to an IRS-certified volunteer if you have questions.

For both services, the VITA Program generally offers this free tax help to people who make \$51,000 or less and need assistance in preparing their own tax returns. IRS-certified volunteers provide free basic income tax return preparation and can inform taxpayers about special tax credits for which they may qualify.

VITA sites are generally located at community and neighborhood centers, libraries, schools, shopping malls, and other convenient locations. Most locations also offer free electronic filing. To find a VITA location near you that offers self-assistance tax preparation or traditional face-to-face tax preparation, go to <http://irs.treasury.gov/freetaxprep/>.

For general information about the VITA program, visit <http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/Free-Tax-Return-Preparation-for-You-by-Volunteers>. For more information about Federal Student Aid, visit [StudentAid.gov](http://StudentAid.gov).

Thank you,

U.S. Department of Education

Federal Student Aid