



**For Immediate Release**  
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## **Illinois Department of Revenue Announces Jan. 26 Start to 2026 Income Tax Season**

**CHICAGO** – The Illinois Department of Revenue (IDOR) today announced that it will begin accepting 2026 individual income tax returns on **Monday, January 26**, the same day the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) opens the federal filing season. The deadline to file Illinois returns is **Wednesday, April 15, 2026**.

IDOR encourages taxpayers to file their returns electronically and choose direct deposit to receive refunds as quickly and securely as possible.

“We want the tax filing process to be as smooth and stress-free as possible” said **IDOR Director David Harris**. “Before filing, you should make sure you have all income documents, such as W-2s and 1099s. Filing online, reviewing information carefully, and submitting your returns early can help avoid delays and get you any refunds you may be entitled to sooner.”

During the 2025 filing season, IDOR received over 6.3 million individual income tax returns. About 5.75 million, or 91.3 percent, were filed electronically. Taxpayers who file accurate returns electronically and select direct deposit can typically receive their refunds in about four weeks.

### ***Free Filing with MyTax Illinois***

[MyTax Illinois](#) is IDOR’s free online filing option that allows taxpayers to file with or without an account. The system guides users through a simple question-and-answer process, performs calculations automatically, and reduces errors by using prepopulated information when available. In addition to filing, MyTax Illinois allows users to:

- Make payments
- Respond to department inquiries
- Check the status of refunds via Where’s My Refund?
- Look up IL-PINs, estimated tax payments, and Form 1099-G information

Taxpayers may also file using tax software, a tax professional, or paper Form IL-1040.

### ***Take Advantage of Tax Credits***

IDOR reminds taxpayers to review their eligibility for [tax credits](#) that can reduce the amount of tax owed or increase a refund. Commonly claimed credits include the Illinois Earned Income Tax Credit, the Property Tax Credit, and the K–12 Education Expense Credit, among others.

“Tax credits can put more money back in your pocket,” **Harris** said. “Taking time to review the credits you qualify for can make a real difference.”

### ***Changes to United States Postal Service’s (USPS) Rules for Postmarks Could Impact Tax Filings***

The United States Postal Service (USPS) has announced changes to postmarks that could impact tax filings in 2026. The USPS postmark now shows the date of the first automated processing operation instead of when a piece of mail was dropped off. This modification could impact time-sensitive documents such as tax returns and payments. USPS will continue to add manual postmarks upon request at their offices. IDOR encourages taxpayers who mail their returns and tax payments to mail those items earlier than they typically would to ensure timely delivery.

“If you plan to mail your return or payment, don’t wait until the last day,” **Harris** stressed. “Sending it early or requesting a manual postmark at the post office can help protect you from late penalties.”

### ***Assistance Is Available***

IDOR provides assistance by phone for tax-related questions, with automated options for checking refund status, identifying IL-PINs, or accessing estimated payments. Taxpayers may call 1-800-732-8866 or 217-782-3336. Free language assistance is available for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals.

For the most up-to-date information, forms, schedules, and instructions for the 2026 tax season, visit [tax.illinois.gov](https://tax.illinois.gov).