



VITA Volunteers FAQ

What is VITA?

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) is an IRS program that trains volunteers to help prepare basic tax returns for people who qualify based on income, individuals with disabilities, and elderly taxpayers for free.

What kind of experience is needed to become a volunteer?

To become a VITA Volunteer you must be at least 18 years of age.

No experience is required, but tax return preparers will need a working knowledge of computers. Our tax software will help guide you every step of the way, or you can volunteer to do customer service. We provide free training to help you learn everything you need to know to file tax returns, and there is no liability for volunteers.

You can decide how much and how often you would like to volunteer with flexible hours at several locations across the community. Serving as a VITA volunteer is a great way to gain job experience, build your community service hours for school, or help out members of our community.

What does the training consist of?

VITA training is free and provided by an IRS-certified instructor. You may choose classroom, on-line learning, self-study or a combination of these options that will educate and prepare you for the tax season.

All of our volunteer tests are open book. All the reference and resource materials we provide may be used to complete the test. Certification is achieved after tests are successfully passed.

What volunteer positions are available?

We have 4 positions to offer and you may choose what best suits your skills and interests.

Our Greeter greets everyone visiting the site to create a pleasant atmosphere. You will screen taxpayers to determine the type of assistance they need and confirm that they have the necessary documents to complete their tax returns. Tax law certification is not required for this position.

Site Administrator/Coordinators will need excellent organizational and leadership skills. You will be the primary resource for sharing your knowledge of the program and are available to assist with any issues that may arise. You will develop and maintain schedules for all volunteers to ensure adequate coverage, supplies and equipment at your site. Site coordinator training is required.

Tax Preparers will complete and successfully certify in tax law training, including the use of electronic filing software, to provide free tax return preparation for eligible taxpayers.

Our Quality Reviewers review tax returns completed by volunteer tax preparers, ensuring that every taxpayer receives top quality service and that the tax returns are error-free. You must be tax law certified at least at the Intermediate level for this position.

When will I begin assisting tax payers?

VITA sites' opening day varies by location

How many hours do I need to volunteer?

You may volunteer as much as you'd like. We do ask that you volunteer a minimum of three hours a week.

What difference will a VITA Volunteer make?

Your assistance will help hard-working families right here in our community to keep more of their money by helping them claim every tax benefit they are entitled to. VITA can help boost a family's yearly income by up to 30%. Last year, we helped file over 3,600 free tax returns, bringing in over 5 million dollars in refunds that local families were able to claim and put back into the local economy.

What are the benefits of being a volunteer?

In addition to learning valuable tax preparation skills, you can put this experience on your resume. It will help you to gain confidence and experience in the workplace and contribute to any community service hours you may need for school. You'll also be able to prepare your own tax refund with the knowledge you gain from volunteering.

If you have other questions or are interested in volunteering, contact United Way of the Coastal Bend at 361-882-2529 or Donna Hurley at donna.hurley@uwcb.org