

Alabama Department of Revenue

News Release

Jan. 16, 2004

Alabama E-Filing Gets Underway Jan. 16, 2004 *Alabama E-filing Update*

Montgomery—The 2004 individual income tax filing season officially gets underway Jan. 16, 2004, according to State Revenue Commissioner Dwight Carlisle. On that date, the Alabama Department of Revenue (ADOR) will begin accepting electronically-filed 2003 individual income tax returns.

Last year, 653,825 Alabamians took advantage of Alabama's electronic filing option, comprising 36 percent of the total 2002 individual income tax returns filed during the 2003 filing season.

What's in store for electronic filers this season? Improvements in filing options and ADOR Web site features headline the 2004 individual income tax electronic filing season.

2004 marks the seventh year of Alabama's participation in the IRS Joint Fed/State Electronic Filing Program. Under the Fed/State E-filing Program, Alabama individual income tax returns are filed electronically along with federal income tax returns. Taxpayers interested in filing their returns electronically should check with their local tax preparation services for tax professionals offering e-filing services. A listing of various tax professionals offering electronic services can be found on the IRS Web site at www.irs.gov.

In 2003, the ADOR expanded its electronic filing program to include participation in the Fed/State STATE-ONLY filing program. The STATE-ONLY filing program allows tax preparers the ability to file federal and state returns together or separately for their clients from a choice of various e-filing software providers. Note, however, that not all software providers may offer a "State-Only" option.

—MORE—

Alabama E-filing Gets Underway
Add One
Jan. 16, 2004

In addition to the Joint Fed/State Programs, taxpayers also have the option of using the ADOR's PC Online Filing Program. ADOR's PC Online Filing Program provides taxpayers the opportunity to file their returns at their convenience at any time from their homes, using their choice of approved software providers. For a listing of the various e-filing software providers, visit ADOR's Web site at www.ador.state.al.us and locate "E Services" and click on "PC Online Filing." The ADOR does not charge a fee for its PC Online Filing Program; however, all approved ADOR electronic return transmitters offering this service do charge a fee for transmitting the return—with the exception of certain filing services offered to low income wage earners and active duty military personnel.

E-filing also offers taxpayers the convenience of direct deposit. The 2004 filing season marks the third year that direct deposit of refunds has been offered to Alabama taxpayers who file electronically. During the 2003 filing season, 194,597 taxpayers chose to have their Alabama refunds direct-deposited into their checking or savings accounts.

Earlier this year, the ADOR launched a new Web site design, aimed at providing visitors with greater accessibility to state tax information. For more information concerning electronic filing services offered by the ADOR, click on "E Services" located on the department's Web site at www.ador.state.al.us.

Taxpayers who file refund returns can check on the status on their state refund either by calling the refund hotline number at (334) 353-2540 or by visiting the department's Web site at www.ador.state.al.us. Taxpayers will be prompted to enter their social security number, the type of return filed, their filing status, and the whole dollar refund amount claimed when using either refund inquiry system.

In past years during the filing season, ADOR offered e-filing services in conjunction with the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program at its

—MORE—

Alabama E-filing Gets Underway
Add Two
Jan. 16, 2004

Birmingham, Dothan, Mobile and Montgomery Taxpayer Service Centers. Because of limited resources, the ADOR will not participate in the VITA Program this year.

For more information concerning Alabama's electronic filing options and opportunities, visit the department's Web site at www.ador.state.al.us.

–30–

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