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M.P. Windsor West



WINDSOR WEST UPDATE

April 2019

Dear friends,

It's tax time again and this year's deadline is April 30, 2019. As this date draws close, I have included some of the new tax tips and deductions available to Canadians on the back pages of this mailing. You can see all ten tax tips at my website at www.brianmasse.ca under the "community mailings" tab.



Some things to remember:

- ♦ Most Canadians' income tax and benefit returns are due on April 30, 2019. Self-employed individuals have until June 15, 2019 to file their returns. Since June 15, 2019 falls on a Saturday, the CRA considers your return to be filed on time, if the CRA receives it by or it is postmarked midnight June 17, 2019. However, if you have a balance owing, you must pay it by April 30, 2019.
- ♦ From now until April 30, 2019, the CRA will be offering extended evening and weekend hours for individual tax enquiries. Approximately 3,000 telephone agents will be available Monday to Friday (except holidays) from 9 am to 9 pm (local time), and from 9 am to 5 pm (local time) on Saturdays (except Easter weekend) to serve as many people as possible. This automated service will remain available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- ♦ By February 11, 2019, the CRA will have mailed the income tax package to individuals who filed on paper the previous year. The new all-in-one 2018 income tax package is improved with simplified language, enhanced information on forms and has a more user-friendly design. If you did not receive this, and you file by paper, please call CRA: **1-800-959-8281**.
- ♦ In addition to the mail out, a limited quantity of tax packages will still be available at Canada Post and Service Canada locations. Canadians will also find information to order these products by phone: **1-800-959-8281**.
- ♦ Individuals with a modest income and a simple tax situation may be eligible to have their tax return completed for free through the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program. Free tax clinics are offered across Canada during March and April, with some open year-round. To find one nearest you please visit: https://apps.cra-arc.gc.ca/ebci/oecv/external/prot/cli_srch_01_ld.action.

Lastly, please do not hesitate to contact my office if you have any questions and we will get you the information you need. Call my team at 519.255.1631 or email brian.masse@parl.gc.ca. Stay in touch!

Brian Masse MP
Windsor West

Beware of CRA Scams

Scammers posing as Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) employees continue to contact Canadians, misleading them into paying false debt. These persistent scammers have created fear among people who now automatically assume that any communication from someone representing the CRA is not genuine.

This tax tip will remind Canadians that the CRA does indeed contact taxpayers by phone, email and mail for legitimate reasons. The following tips will help Canadians identify legitimate communications from the CRA.



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Volunteer firefighters' amount (VFA) and Search and rescue volunteers' amount

You can claim \$3,000 for the VFA or the SRVA (but not both) if you were a volunteer firefighter or a search and rescue volunteer during the year and you completed at least 200 hours of eligible volunteer firefighting services or eligible search and rescue volunteer services in the year.

The hours volunteered for both search and rescue and firefighter activities can be combined to claim either the VFA or the SRVA. You cannot claim both.

As a volunteer firefighter or search and rescue volunteer, you may be eligible to claim a \$1,000 exemption for each eligible employer, instead of the VFA or the SRVA.

Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA)

A Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA) can help you while you work towards your short and long-term financial goals. A TFSA is a flexible, registered savings account: investment income, including capital gains, earned within the account is not taxed; and withdrawals are tax-free. Canadians who are 18 and older can contribute up to \$5,500 each year. This amount will be raised to 6,000\$ in 2019. Maybe you would consider adjusting your contributions accordingly. It's important to remember that withdrawn money can only be re-contributed in future years. It cannot be re-contributed in the

When will CRA Call?

The CRA may

- ask for financial information such as the name of your bank and its location
- send you a notice of assessment or re-assessment
- ask you to pay an amount you owe through any of the CRA's payment options
- take legal action to recover the money you owe, if you refuse to pay your debt
- write to you to begin an audit process



The CRA will NEVER

- set up a meeting with you in a public place to take a payment
- demand immediate payment by Interac e-transfer, bitcoin, prepaid credit cards or gift cards from retailers such as iTunes, Amazon, or others
- threaten you with arrest or a prison sentence