

CALIFORNIA

# 540 2EZ

Forms & Instructions

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**2021**

Personal Income Tax Booklet

Members of the Franchise Tax Board

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
Franchise Tax Board

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## What's New and Other Important Information for 2021

**Voluntary Contributions** – You may contribute to the following new funds:

- Mental Health Crisis Prevention Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund
- California Community and Neighborhood Tree Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund

**Dependent Exemption Credit with No ID** – For taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2018, taxpayers claiming a dependent exemption credit for a dependent who is ineligible for a Social Security Number (SSN) and a federal Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) may provide alternative information to the Franchise Tax Board (FTB) to identify the dependent. To claim the dependent exemption credit, taxpayers complete form FTB 3568, Alternative Identifying Information for the Dependent Exemption Credit, attach the form and required documentation to their tax return, and write “no id” in the SSN field of line 8, Dependents, on Form 540 2EZ, California Resident Income Tax Return. For each dependent being claimed that does not have an SSN and an ITIN, a form FTB 3568 must be provided along with supporting documentation.

Taxpayers may amend their tax returns beginning with taxable year 2018 to claim the dependent exemption credit. For more information on how to amend your tax returns, see “Instructions for Filing a 2021 Amended Return” on page 16.

**Expansion for Credits Eligibility** – For taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2020, California expanded Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Young Child Tax Credit (YCTC) eligibility to allow either the federal ITIN or SSN to be used by all eligible individuals, their spouses, and qualifying children. If an ITIN is used, eligible individuals should provide identifying documents upon request of the FTB. Any valid SSN can be used, not only those that are valid for work. Additionally, upon receiving a valid SSN, the individual should notify the FTB in the time and manner prescribed by the FTB. The YCTC is available if the eligible individual or spouse has a qualifying child younger than six years old. For more information, get form FTB 3514, California Earned Income Tax Credit, or go to [ftb.ca.gov](http://ftb.ca.gov) and search for **eitc**.

**Resident State Tax Filers List** – For taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2020, taxpayers will include on their Form 540 2EZ the address and county of their principal residence as part of the FTB's annual reporting requirements to the jury commissioner. Taxpayers that are required to provide this information include persons who are 18 years of age or older and have filed a California resident income tax return for the preceding taxable year. The list of resident state tax filers will be used as one of the source lists for jury selection by the jury commissioner's office. For more information, see specific line instructions or California Revenue and Taxation Code (R&TC) Sections 19548.4 and 19585.

**Minimum Essential Coverage Individual Mandate** – For taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2020, California law requires residents and their dependents to obtain and maintain minimum essential coverage (MEC), also referred to as qualifying health care coverage.

Individuals who fail to maintain qualifying health care coverage for any month during the taxable year will be subject to a penalty unless they qualify for an exemption.

For more information, see Specific Line Instructions for Form 540 2EZ, line 27 or get form FTB 3853, Health Coverage Exemptions and Individual Shared Responsibility Penalty.

**Young Child Tax Credit** – For taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2019, the refundable YCTC is available to taxpayers who also qualify for the California EITC and who have at least one qualifying child who is younger than six years old as of the last day of the taxable year. The maximum amount of credit allowable for a qualified taxpayer is \$1,000. The credit amount phases out as earned income exceeds the threshold amount of \$25,000, and completely phases out at \$30,000. For more information, see Specific Line Instructions for Form 540 2EZ, line 24, and get form FTB 3514.

**California Earned Income Tax Credit** – For taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2018, the age limit for an eligible individual without a qualifying child is revised to 18 years or older. For more information, go to [ftb.ca.gov](http://ftb.ca.gov) and search for **eitc**, or get form FTB 3514.

For taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2017, California conforms to federal law to include in the definition of earned income net earnings from self employment. If you have self-employment income, you cannot use Form 540 2EZ. Get Form 540, California Resident Income Tax Return at [ftb.ca.gov/forms](http://ftb.ca.gov/forms) or **e-file**.

Earned income thresholds have also increased. You may now qualify for the refundable EITC if you have earned income of less than \$30,001.

**Federal Earned Income Credit (EIC)** – Go to the IRS website at [irs.gov/taxtopics](http://irs.gov/taxtopics) and choose topic **601**, get the federal income tax booklet, or go to [irs.gov](http://irs.gov) and search for **eitc assistant**.

**Real Estate Withholding Statement** – Effective January 1, 2020, the real estate withholding forms and instructions have been consolidated into one new **Form 593, Real Estate Withholding Statement**. For more information, get Form 593.

**Schedule X, California Explanation of Amended Return Changes** – For taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2017, use Schedule X to determine any additional amount you owe or refund due to you, and to provide reason(s) for amending your previously filed income tax return. For additional information, see “Instructions for Filing a 2021 Amended Return” on page 16.

**Improper Withholding on Severance Paid to Veterans** – The Combat-Injured Veterans Tax Fairness Act of 2016 gives veterans who retired from the Armed Forces for medical reasons additional time to claim a refund if they had taxes improperly withheld from their severance pay. If you filed an amended return with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) on this issue, you have two years to file your amended California return.

**Electronic Funds Withdrawal (EFW)** – Make extension payments using tax preparation software. Check with your software provider to determine if they support EFW for extension payments.

**Payments and Credits Applied to Use Tax** – For taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2015, if a taxpayer includes use tax on their personal income tax return, payments and credits will be applied to use tax first, then towards income tax, interest, and penalties. For more information, see Specific Line Instructions for Form 540 2EZ, line 26.

**MyFTB** – Make tax time less taxing! Check MyFTB for information about your FTB-issued Form 1099-G, Report of State Income Tax Refund; Form 1099-INT, Statement of Interest Income; California wage and withholding data; and more! Go to [ftb.ca.gov](http://ftb.ca.gov) and login or register for MyFTB.

**Direct Deposit Refund** – You can request a direct deposit refund on your tax return whether you e-file or file a paper return. Be sure to fill in the routing and account numbers carefully and double-check the numbers for accuracy to avoid it being rejected by your bank.

**Direct Deposit for ScholarShare 529 College Savings Plans** – If you have a ScholarShare 529 College Savings Plan account maintained by the ScholarShare Investment Board, you may have your refund directly deposited to your ScholarShare account. Please visit [scholarshare529.com](http://scholarshare529.com) for instructions.

**Mandatory Electronic Payments** – You are required to remit all your payments electronically once you make an estimate or extension payment exceeding \$20,000 or you file an original tax return with a total tax liability over \$80,000. Once you meet this threshold, all subsequent payments regardless of amount, tax type, or taxable year must be remitted electronically. The first payment that would trigger the mandatory e-pay requirement does not have to be made electronically. Individuals who do not send the payment electronically will be subject to a 1% noncompliance penalty.

You can request a waiver from mandatory e-pay if one or more of the following is true:

- You have not made an estimated tax or extension payment in excess of \$20,000 during the current or previous taxable year.
- Your total tax liability reported for the previous taxable year did not exceed \$80,000.
- The amount you paid is not representative of your total tax liability.

For more information or to obtain the waiver form, go to [ftb.ca.gov/e-pay](http://ftb.ca.gov/e-pay). Electronic payments can be made using Web Pay on the FTB's website, EFW as part of the e-file tax return, or your credit card.

**Registered Domestic Partners (RDP)** – Under California law, RDPs must file their California income tax return using either the married/RDP filing jointly or married/RDP filing separately filing status. RDPs have the same legal benefits, protections, and responsibilities as married couples unless otherwise specified.

If you entered into a same-sex legal union in another state, other than a marriage, and that union has been determined to be substantially equivalent to a California registered domestic partnership, you are required to file a California income tax return using either the married/RDP filing jointly or married/RDP filing separately filing status.

For purposes of California income tax, references to a spouse, husband, or wife also refer to an RDP, unless otherwise specified. When we use the initials RDP, they refer to both a California registered domestic "partner" and a California registered domestic "partnership," as applicable. For more information on RDPs, get FTB Pub. 737, Tax Information for Registered Domestic Partners.

**Head of Household** – California requires taxpayers who use head of household (HOH) filing status to file form FTB 3532, Head of Household Filing Status Schedule, to report how the HOH filing status was determined.

If you do not attach a completed form FTB 3532 to your tax return, we will deny your HOH filing status. For more information about the HOH filing requirements, go to [ftb.ca.gov](http://ftb.ca.gov) and search for **hoh**. To get form FTB 3532, see "Automated Phone Service" or go to [ftb.ca.gov/forms](http://ftb.ca.gov/forms).

# Qualifying to Use Form 540 2EZ

Check the table below to make sure you qualify to use Form 540 2EZ.

<b>General</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>California resident entire year</li> <li>Not blind</li> </ul>
<b>Filing Status</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Single</li> <li>Head of household</li> <li>Married/RDP filing jointly</li> <li>Qualifying widow(er)</li> </ul>
<b>You May</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be claimed as a dependent by another taxpayer (see Note below)</li> <li>Be 65 or older and claim the senior exemption. If your (or your spouse's/RDP's) 65th birthday is on January 1, 2022, you are considered to be age 65 on December 31, 2021.</li> </ul>
<b>Dependents</b>	0 – 3 allowed
<b>Types of Income</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wages, salaries, and tips</li> <li>Taxable interest, dividends, and pensions</li> <li>Taxable scholarship and fellowship grants (only if reported on federal Form(s) W-2)</li> <li>Unemployment compensation (reported on federal Form 1099-G)</li> <li>Capital gains from mutual funds (reported on federal Form 1099-DIV, box 2a only)</li> <li>Paid Family Leave Insurance</li> <li>U.S. social security benefits</li> <li>Tier 1 and Tier 2 railroad retirement payments</li> </ul>
<b>Total Income</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$100,000 or less (single or head of household)</li> <li>\$200,000 or less (married/RDP filing jointly or qualifying widow(er))</li> </ul> <p>Total income includes wages, salaries, tips, taxable scholarship or fellowship grants, interest, dividends, pensions, and capital gains from mutual funds.</p>
<b>Adjustments to Income</b>	No adjustments to total income, such as student loan interest deduction, IRA deduction, etc.
<b>Deduction</b>	Standard deduction only. If you use the modified standard deduction for dependents, see Note below.
<b>Payments</b>	Only withholding shown on federal Form(s) W-2 and 1099-R
<b>Exemptions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal exemption (see Note below)</li> <li>Senior exemption</li> <li>Up to three dependent exemptions</li> </ul>
<b>Credits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nonrefundable Renter's Credit</li> <li>Refundable California Earned Income Tax Credit</li> <li>Refundable Young Child Tax Credit</li> </ul>

**Note:** You cannot use Form 540 2EZ if you can be claimed as a dependent and **any** of the following are true:

- You have a dependent of your own.
- You are single and your total income is less than or equal to \$15,953.
- You are married/RDP filing jointly or a qualifying widow(er) and your total income is less than or equal to \$31,856.
- You are head of household and your total income is less than or equal to \$22,556.
- You are required to use a modified standard deduction for dependents. See Frequently Asked Questions, question 1, Do I have to file?

If you do not qualify, go to [ftb.ca.gov](http://ftb.ca.gov) for information about **CalFile** and **e-file** or download and print Form 540 at [ftb.ca.gov/forms](http://ftb.ca.gov/forms).

If you are a nonresident or part-year resident, get Form 540NR, California Nonresident or Part-Year Resident Income Tax Return. See "Automated Phone Service", or go to [ftb.ca.gov/forms](http://ftb.ca.gov/forms).

## Steps to Determine Filing Requirements

**Step 1:** Is your gross income (all income you received in the form of money, goods, property, and services from all sources that are not exempt from tax) more than the amount shown in the California Gross Income chart below for your filing status, age, and number of dependents? If yes, you have a filing requirement. If no, go to Step 2.

**Step 2:** Is your adjusted gross income (federal adjusted gross income from all sources reduced or increased by all California income adjustments) more than the amount shown in the California Adjusted Gross Income chart below for your filing status, age, and number of dependents? If yes, you have a filing requirement. If no, you do not have a filing requirement. If you do not have a filing requirement, you must file a tax return to claim your withholding. You may be eligible for the federal Earned Income Credit; see What's New and Other Important Information for more information.

On 12/31/21, my filing status was:	and on 12/31/21, my age was: (If your 65th birthday is on January 1, 2022, you are considered to be age 65 on December 31, 2021.)	California Gross Income			California Adjusted Gross Income		
		Dependents			Dependents		
		0	1	2 or more	0	1	2 or more
Single or Head of Household (Get FTB Pub. 1540, Tax Information for Head of Household Filing Status.)	Under 65	19,310	32,643	42,643	15,448	28,781	38,781
	65 or older	25,760	35,760	43,760	21,898	31,898	39,898
Married/RDP filing jointly (The income of both spouses/RDPs must be combined.)	Under 65 (both spouses/RDPs)	38,624	51,957	61,957	30,901	44,234	54,234
	65 or older (one spouse/RDP)	45,074	55,074	63,074	37,351	47,351	55,351
	65 or older (both spouses/RDPs)	51,524	61,524	69,524	43,801	53,801	61,801
Qualifying widow(er)	Under 65		32,643	42,643		28,781	38,781
	65 or older		35,760	43,760		31,898	39,898
Dependent of another person – Any filing status	Any age	More than your standard deduction, see Frequently Asked Questions, question 1.					

# Nonrefundable Renter's Credit Qualification Record



e-file and skip this page! The software you use to e-file will help you find out if you qualify for this credit and will figure the correct amount of the credit automatically. You can claim the nonrefundable Renter's Credit using CalFile.

If you were a resident of California and paid rent on property in California, which was your principal residence, you may qualify for a credit that you can use to reduce your tax. Answer the questions below to see if you qualify. For purposes of California income tax, references to a spouse, husband, or wife also refer to a California Registered Domestic Partnership (RDP), unless otherwise specified. When we use the initials RDP, they refer to both a California registered domestic "partner" and a California registered domestic "partnership," as applicable. For more information on RDPs, get FTB Pub. 737. **Do not mail this record. Keep with your tax records.**

<p><b>1. Were you a resident of California for the entire year in 2021?</b>                  Military personnel: If you are not a legal resident of California, you do not qualify for this credit. However, your spouse/RDP may claim this credit if he or she was a resident during 2021 and is otherwise qualified.  <b>YES.</b> Go to question 2. <b>NO.</b> Stop here. File Form 540NR. Go to <a href="http://ftb.ca.gov/forms">ftb.ca.gov/forms</a> for more information regarding this form.</p>
<p><b>2. Is your California adjusted gross income, the amount on Form 540 2EZ, line 16:</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$45,448 or less if single; or</li> <li>• \$90,896 or less if married/RDP filing jointly, head of household, or qualifying widow(er)?</li> </ul> <b>YES.</b> Go to question 3. <b>NO.</b> Stop here. You do not qualify for this credit.</p>
<p><b>3. Did you pay rent, for at least half of 2021, on property (including a mobile home that you owned on rented land) in California, which was your principal residence?</b>  <b>YES.</b> Go to question 4. <b>NO.</b> Stop here. You do not qualify for this credit.</p>
<p><b>4. Can you be claimed as a dependent by a parent, foster parent, legal guardian, or any other person in 2021?</b>  <b>NO.</b> Go to question 6. <b>YES.</b> Go to question 5.</p>
<p><b>5. For more than half the year in 2021, did you live in the home of the person who can claim you as a dependent?</b>  <b>NO.</b> Go to question 6. <b>YES.</b> Stop here. You do not qualify for this credit.</p>
<p><b>6. Was the property you rented exempt from property tax in 2021?</b>                  You do not qualify for this credit if, for more than half of the year, you rented property that was exempt from property taxes. Exempt property includes most government-owned buildings, church-owned parsonages, college dormitories, and military barracks. However, if you or your landlord paid possessory interest taxes for the property you rented, then you may claim this credit.  <b>NO.</b> Go to question 7. <b>YES.</b> Stop here. You do not qualify for this credit.</p>
<p><b>7. Did you claim the homeowner's property tax exemption anytime during 2021?</b>                  You do not qualify for this credit if you or your spouse/RDP received a homeowner's property tax exemption at any time during the year. However, if you lived apart from your spouse/RDP for the entire year and your spouse/RDP received a homeowner's property tax exemption for a separate residence, then you may claim this credit if you are otherwise qualified.  <b>NO.</b> Go to question 8. <b>YES.</b> If your filing status is single, stop here, you do not qualify for this credit. If your filing status is married/RDP filing jointly, go to question 9.</p>
<p><b>8. Were you single in 2021?</b>  <b>YES.</b> Go to question 11. <b>NO.</b> Go to question 9.</p>
<p><b>9. Did your spouse/RDP claim the homeowner's property tax exemption anytime during 2021?</b>                  You do not qualify for this credit if you or your spouse/RDP received a homeowner's property tax exemption at any time during the year. However, if you lived apart from your spouse/RDP for the entire year and your spouse/RDP received a homeowner's property tax exemption for a separate residence, then you may claim this credit if you are otherwise qualified.  <b>NO.</b> Go to question 11. <b>YES.</b> If both you and your spouse/RDP claimed the homeowner's property tax exemption, stop here, you do not qualify for this credit. Otherwise, go to question 10.</p>
<p><b>10. Did you and your spouse/RDP maintain separate residences for the entire year in 2021?</b>  <b>YES.</b> Go to question 11. <b>NO.</b> Stop here. You do not qualify for this credit.</p>
<p><b>11. If you are:</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single, enter \$60 on Form 540 2EZ, line 19.</li> <li>• Head of household or qualifying widow(er), enter \$120 on Form 540 2EZ, line 19.</li> <li>• Married/RDP filing jointly, enter \$120 on Form 540 2EZ, line 19. (Exception: If one spouse/RDP claimed the homeowner's tax exemption and you lived apart from your spouse/RDP for the entire year, enter \$60 on Form 540 2EZ, line 19.)</li> </ul> </p>

Fill in the street address(es) and landlord information below for the residence(s) you rented in California during 2021, which qualified you for this credit.

<b>Street Address</b>	<b>City, State, and ZIP Code</b>	<b>Dates Rented in 2021 (From _____ to _____)</b>
a _____		
b _____		

Enter the name, address, and telephone number of your landlord(s) or the person(s) to whom you paid rent for the residence(s) listed above.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Street Address</b>	<b>City, State, ZIP Code, and Telephone Number</b>
a _____		
b _____		

# Voluntary Contribution Fund Descriptions

Make voluntary contributions of \$1 or more in whole dollar amounts to the funds listed below. To contribute to the California Seniors Special Fund, use the instructions for code 400 below. The amount you contribute either reduces your overpaid tax or increases your tax due. You may contribute only to the funds listed and cannot change the amount you contribute after you file your tax return. For more information, go to [ftb.ca.gov](http://ftb.ca.gov) and search for **voluntary contributions**.

**Code 400, California Seniors Special Fund** – If you and/or your spouse/RDP are 65 years of age or older as of January 1, 2022, and claim the Senior Exemption Credit, you may make a combined total contribution of up to \$258 or \$129 per spouse/RDP. Contributions made to this fund will be distributed to the Area Agency on Aging Councils (TACC) to provide advice on and sponsorship of Senior Citizens issues. Any excess contributions not required by TACC will be distributed to senior citizen service organizations throughout California for meals, adult day care, and transportation.

**Code 401, Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementia Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund** – Contributions will be used to provide grants to California scientists to study Alzheimer's disease and related disorders. This research includes basic science, diagnosis, treatment, prevention, behavioral problems, and caregiving. With almost 600,000 Californians living with the disease and another 2 million providing care to a loved one with Alzheimer's, our state is in the early stages of a major public health crisis. Your contribution will ensure that Alzheimer's disease receives the attention, research, and resources it deserves. For more information, go to [cdph.ca.gov](http://cdph.ca.gov) and search for **Alzheimer**.

**Code 403, Rare and Endangered Species Preservation Voluntary Tax Contribution Program** – Contributions will be used to help protect and conserve California's many threatened and endangered species and the wild lands that they need to survive, for the enjoyment and benefit of you and future generations of Californians.

**Code 405, California Breast Cancer Research Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund** – Contributions will fund research toward preventing and curing breast cancer. Breast cancer is the most common cancer to strike women in California. It kills 4,000 California women each year. Contributions also fund research on prevention and better treatment, and keep doctors up-to-date on research progress. For more information about the research your contributions support, go to [cbcrp.org](http://cbcrp.org). Your contribution can help make breast cancer a disease of the past.

**Code 406, California Firefighters' Memorial Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund** – Contributions will be used for the repair and maintenance of the California Firefighters' Memorial on the grounds of the State Capitol, ceremonies to honor the memory of fallen firefighters and to assist surviving loved ones, and for an informational guide detailing survivor benefits to assist the spouses/RDPs and children of fallen firefighters.

**Code 407, Emergency Food for Families Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund** – Contributions will be used to help local food banks feed California's hungry. Your contribution will fund the purchase of much-needed food for delivery to food banks, pantries, and soup kitchens throughout the state. The State Department of Social Services will monitor its distribution to ensure the food is given to those most in need.

**Code 408, California Peace Officer Memorial Foundation Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund** – Contributions will be used to preserve the memory of California's fallen peace officers and assist the families they left behind. Since statehood, over 1,300 courageous California peace officers have made the ultimate sacrifice while protecting law-abiding citizens. The non-profit charitable organization, California Peace Officers' Memorial Foundation, has accepted the privilege and responsibility of maintaining a memorial for fallen officers on the State Capitol grounds. Each May, the Memorial Foundation conducts a dignified ceremony honoring fallen officers and their surviving families by offering moral support, crisis counseling, and financial support that includes academic scholarships for the children of those officers who have made the supreme sacrifice. On behalf of all of us and the law-abiding citizens of California, thank you for your participation.

**Code 410, California Sea Otter Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund** – The California Coastal Conservancy and the Department of Fish and Wildlife will each be allocated 50% of the contributions. Contributions allocated to the California Coastal Conservancy will be used for research, science, protection, projects, or programs related to the Federal Sea Otter Recovery Plan or improving the nearshore ocean ecosystem, including, program activities to reduce sea otter mortality. Contributions allocated to the Department of Fish and Wildlife will be used to establish a sea otter fund within the department's index coding system for increased investigation, prevention, and enforcement action.

**Code 413, California Cancer Research Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund** – Contributions will be used to conduct research relating to the causes, detection, and prevention of cancer and to expand community-based education on cancer, and to provide prevention and awareness activities for communities that are disproportionately at risk or afflicted by cancer.

**Code 422, School Supplies for Homeless Children Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund** – Contributions will be used to provide school supplies and health-related products to homeless children.

**Code 423, State Parks Protection Fund/Parks Pass Purchase** – Contributions will be used for the protection and preservation of California's state parks and for the cost of a Vehicle Day Use Annual Pass valid at most park units where day use fees are collected. The pass is not valid at off-highway vehicle units, or for camping, oversized vehicle, extra vehicle, per-person, or supplemental fees. If a taxpayer's contribution equals or exceeds \$195, the taxpayer will receive a single Vehicle Day Use Annual Pass. Amounts contributed in excess of the parks pass cost may be deducted as a charitable contribution for the year in which the voluntary contribution is made. Any contribution less than \$195 will be treated as a voluntary contribution and may be deducted as a charitable contribution. For more information, go to [parks.ca.gov/annualpass/](http://parks.ca.gov/annualpass/) or email [info@parks.ca.gov](mailto:info@parks.ca.gov).

**Code 424, Protect Our Coast and Oceans Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund** – Contributions will be used to provide grants to community organizations working to protect, restore, and enhance the California coast and ocean. Contributions will support shoreline cleanups, habitat restoration, coastal access improvements, and ocean education programs.

**Code 425, Keep Arts in Schools Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund** – Contributions will be used by the Arts Council for the allocation of grants to individuals or organizations administering arts programs for children in preschool through 12th grade.

**Code 431, Prevention of Animal Homelessness and Cruelty Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund** – Contributions will be used to provide funding to programs designed to prevent and eliminate animal homelessness and cruelty, research that explores novel approaches to preventing and eliminating pet homelessness, and the prevention, investigation, and prosecution of animal cruelty and neglect.

**Code 438, California Senior Citizen Advocacy Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund** – Contributions will be used to conduct the sessions of the California Senior Legislature and to support its ongoing activities on behalf of older persons.

**Code 439, Native California Wildlife Rehabilitation Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund** – Contributions will be used to support the recovery and rehabilitation of injured, sick, or orphaned native wildlife, and conservation education.

**Code 440, Rape Kit Backlog Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund** – Contributions will be used for DNA testing in the processing of rape kits.

**Code 443, Schools Not Prisons Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund** – Contributions will be used to fund academic and career readiness programs that seek to break the school-to-prison pipeline.

**Code 444, Suicide Prevention Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund** – Contributions will be used to fund crisis center programs designed to provide suicide prevention services.

**Code 445, Mental Health Crisis Prevention Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund** – Contributions will be used to fund the Crisis Intervention Team program that trains peace officers to assist and engage safely with persons living with mental illness.

**Code 446, California Community and Neighborhood Tree Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund** – Contributions will be used to support the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's grant program for urban forest management activities under the California Urban Forestry Act of 1978. This program focuses on bringing trees to communities that are disadvantaged or lack government infrastructure needed to enter into and support urban tree planting and care agreements.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. Do I have to file?

In general, you must file a California tax return if you are:

**Single, or head of household, and either of the following apply:**

- Gross income is more than \$19,310
- California adjusted gross income is more than \$15,448

**Married/RDP filing jointly and either of the following apply:**

- Gross income is more than \$38,624
- California adjusted gross income is more than \$30,901

**Qualifying widow(er) and either of the following apply:**

- Gross income is more than \$32,643
- California adjusted gross income is more than \$28,781

**Able to be claimed as a dependent of another taxpayer** and either your gross income or adjusted gross income is more than your standard deduction.

You cannot use Form 540 2EZ if your total wages, salaries, and tips are less than the following amounts based on your filing status:

Single . . . . . \$4,453  
Married/RDP filing jointly, head of household,  
or qualifying widow(er) . . . . . \$9,256  
The amounts above represent the standard deduction minus \$350.

Get Form 540 at [ftb.ca.gov/forms](http://ftb.ca.gov/forms) or file online through **CalFile** or **e-file**.

See “Steps to Determine Filing Requirements.”

## 2. How can I get help?

Throughout California, more than 1,200 sites provide trained volunteers offering free help during the tax filing season to persons who need to file simple federal and state income tax returns. Many military bases also provide this service for members of the U.S. Armed Forces. Go to [ftb.ca.gov](http://ftb.ca.gov) and search for **vita** to find a list of participating locations or call the FTB at 800.852.5711 to find a location near you.

## 3. When do I have to file?

File and pay by April 18, 2022, but if you can't file by that date, you get an automatic paperless extension to file by October 17, 2022. Any tax due must be paid by April 18, 2022, to avoid penalties and interest. Get form FTB 3519, Payment for Automatic Extension for Individuals. You cannot use Form 540 2EZ if you make an extension payment with form FTB 3519. You can CalFile, e-file, or use Form 540 or Form 540NR when you file your tax return.

If you are in the military, you may be entitled to certain extensions. For more information, get FTB Pub. 1032, Tax Information for Military Personnel.

## 4. I don't have my federal Forms W-2. What do I do?

If all your federal Forms W-2 were not received by January 31, 2022, contact your employer. Only an employer issues or corrects federal Form W-2. California wage and withholding information is available on MyFTB at [ftb.ca.gov](http://ftb.ca.gov). For more information, call 800.338.0505, follow the recorded instructions and enter code **204** when instructed.

## 5. Is direct deposit safe?

Direct deposit is safe and convenient. To have your refund directly deposited into your bank account, fill in the account information on Form 540 2EZ, Side 4, line 37 and line 38. Fill in the routing and account numbers and indicate the account type.

## 6. I discovered an error on my tax return. What should I do?

If you discover an error on your California income tax return after you filed it (paper or e-file), file an amended Form 540 2EZ and

attach Schedule X to correct your previously filed tax return. Get Schedule X at [ftb.ca.gov/forms](http://ftb.ca.gov/forms) or call 800.338.0505, follow the recorded instructions, and enter code **908** when instructed.

## 7. I owe tax, but don't have the money. What can I do?

If you cannot pay on or before the due date, you may request approval to make monthly installments. You may pay using Web Pay or a credit card. See “Paying Your Taxes,” for information on Web Pay, Credit Card, and Request Monthly Installments.

## 8. How can I find out about the status of my refund?

Go to [ftb.ca.gov](http://ftb.ca.gov) and search for **refund status** or call 800.338.0505.

## 9. How long do I keep my tax records?

Generally, keep your California income tax records for at least four years from the due date of the tax return or four years from the date the tax return is filed, whichever is later. However, an extended period may apply for California or federal tax returns related or subject to federal audit.

## 10. I will be moving after I file my tax return. How do I notify the FTB of my new address?

Go to [ftb.ca.gov](http://ftb.ca.gov) and login or register for MyFTB or call 800.852.5711 and follow the recorded instructions to report a change of address. You may also use form FTB 3533, Change of Address for Individuals. This form is available at [ftb.ca.gov/forms](http://ftb.ca.gov/forms). If you change your address online or by phone, you do not need to file form FTB 3533.

## 11. The IRS made changes to my federal tax return. What should I do?

If your federal income tax return is examined and changed by the IRS and you owe additional tax, report these changes to the FTB within six months of the date of the final federal determination. If the changes the IRS made result in a refund due for California, claim a refund within two years of the date of the final federal determination. File an amended Form 540 2EZ and Schedule X to correct your previously filed income tax return and mail them to the following address, as applicable:

Without payment

FRANCHISE TAX BOARD  
PO BOX 942840  
SACRAMENTO CA 94240-0001

With payment

FRANCHISE TAX BOARD  
PO BOX 942867  
SACRAMENTO CA 92467-0001

or send a copy of federal changes to:

ATTN RAR/VOL MS F310  
FRANCHISE TAX BOARD  
PO BOX 1998  
RANCHO CORDOVA CA 95741-1998

or fax the information to 916.843.2269.

If you have a question **relating to the IRS audit adjustment**, call 916.845.4028.

For general tax information or questions, please call 800.852.5711.

Regardless of which method you use to notify the FTB, you must include a copy of the final federal determination along with all data and schedules on which the federal adjustment was based. Get FTB Pub. 1008, Federal Tax Adjustments and Your Notification Responsibilities to California, for more information. See “Automated Phone Service.”

# Additional Information

## Your Rights As A Taxpayer

The FTB's goals include making certain that your rights are protected so that you have the highest confidence in the integrity, efficiency, and fairness of our state tax system. For more information, get FTB 4058, California Taxpayers' Bill of Rights.

## Innocent Joint Filer Relief

You may qualify for relief from liability for tax on a joint tax return if (1) there is an understatement of tax because your spouse/RDP omitted income or claimed false deductions or credits, (2) you are divorced, legally separated, terminated your registered domestic partnership, or are no longer living with your spouse/RDP, **and** (3) given all the facts and circumstances, it would be unfair to hold you liable for the tax. For more information, get form FTB 705, Innocent Joint Filer Relief Request, at [ftb.ca.gov/forms](http://ftb.ca.gov/forms), or by calling 916.845.7072, Monday - Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. except holidays.

## California Use Tax General Information

The use tax has been in effect in California since July 1, 1935. It applies to purchases of merchandise for use in California from out-of-state sellers and is similar to the sales tax paid on purchases you make in California. If you have not already paid all use tax due to the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration, you may be able to report and pay the use tax due on your state income tax return. See the information below and the instructions for Line 26 of your income tax return.

In general, you must pay California use tax on purchases of merchandise for use in California made from out-of-state sellers, for example, by telephone, over the Internet, by mail, or in person.

You must pay California use tax on taxable items if:

- The seller does not collect California sales or use tax, and
- You use, gift, store, or consume the item in this state.

Example: You live in California and purchase a dining table from a company in North Carolina. The company ships the table from North Carolina to your home for your use and does not charge California sales or use tax. You owe use tax on the purchase.

However, not all purchases require you to pay use tax. For example, you would include purchases of clothing, but not exempt purchases of food products or prescription medicine.

For more information on nontaxable and exempt purchases, you may refer to Publication 61, Sales and Use Taxes: Exemptions and Exclusions, on the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration's website at [cdtfa.ca.gov](http://cdtfa.ca.gov).

For information about California use tax, please refer to the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration's website at [cdtfa.ca.gov](http://cdtfa.ca.gov) and type "Find Information About Use Tax" in the search bar.

**Complete the Use Tax Worksheet** on page 8 or **use the Use Tax Lookup Table** on page 9, to calculate the amount due.

**Extensions to File.** If you request an extension to file your income tax return, wait until you file your tax return to report your purchases subject to use tax and make your use tax payment.

**Interest, Penalties and Fees.** Failure to timely report and pay the use tax due may result in the assessment of interest, penalties, and fees.

**Application of Payments.** For purchases made during taxable years starting on or after January 1, 2015, payments and credits reported on an income tax return will be applied first to the use tax liability, instead of income tax liabilities, penalties, and interest.

**Changes in Use Tax Reported.** Do not file an Amended Income Tax Return to revise the use tax previously reported. If you have changes to

the amount of use tax previously reported on the original return, contact the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration.

For assistance with your use tax questions, go to the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration's website at [cdtfa.ca.gov](http://cdtfa.ca.gov) or call their Customer Service Center at 800.400.7115 (CRS:711) (for hearing and speech disabilities). For California income tax information, contact the Franchise Tax Board at [ftb.ca.gov](http://ftb.ca.gov).

## Voting Is Everybody's Business

To register to vote in California, you must be:

- A United States citizen and a resident of California,
- 18 years old or older on Election Day,
- Not currently in state or federal prison or on parole for the conviction of a felony, and
- Not currently found mentally incompetent to vote by a court.

Pre-register at 16. Vote at 18. Voter pre-registration is now available for 16 and 17 year olds who otherwise meet the voter registration eligibility requirements. California youth who pre-register to vote will have their registration become active once they turn 18 years old.

If you wish to receive a paper Voter Registration or Pre-Registration Application, call the California Secretary of State's Voter Hotline at 800-345-VOTE or simply register online at [RegisterToVote.ca.gov](http://RegisterToVote.ca.gov). For more information about how and when to register to vote, visit [sos.ca.gov/elections](http://sos.ca.gov/elections).

## It's Your Right . . . Register and Vote.

## Write To Us

If you write to us, be sure your letter includes your social security number or individual taxpayer identification number, and preferred phone number. If you have a question about a notice that we sent to you, be sure to include a copy of the notice. Send your letter to:

FRANCHISE TAX BOARD  
PO BOX 942340  
SACRAMENTO CA 94240-0040

We will respond within 10 weeks. In some cases, we may call you to respond to your inquiry, or to ask you for additional information. **Do not** attach correspondence to your tax return unless the correspondence relates to an item on your return.



# Instructions for Filing a 2021 Amended Return

## Important Information

**Protective Claim** – If you are filing a claim for refund for a taxable year where an audit is being conducted by another state's taxing agency, litigation is pending or where a final determination by the IRS is pending, check box a for "Protective claim for refund" on Schedule X, Part II, line 1. Specify the pending litigation or reference to the federal determination on Part II, line 2 so we can properly process your claim.

**Do not** attach your previously filed return to your amended return.

**Do not** file an amended return to correct your SSN, name, or address, instead, call or write us. See "Contacting the Franchise Tax Board" for more information.

**Use Tax** – **Do not** amend your return to correct a use tax error reported on your original tax return. Enter the amount from your original return. The California Department of Tax and Fee Administration (CDTFA) administers this tax. Refer all questions or requests relating to use tax to the CDTFA at [cdtfa.ca.gov](http://cdtfa.ca.gov) or call **800.400.7115**.

**Voluntary Contributions** – You cannot amend voluntary contributions. Enter the amount from your original return.

**Direct Deposit** – You can now use direct deposit on your amended return.

When filing an amended return, only complete the amended Form 540 2EZ through line 36. Next complete the Schedule X. The amount from Schedule X, line 11 is your additional refund amount. This amount will be carried over to your amended Form 540 2EZ and will be entered on line 37 and line 38. The total of the amended Form 540 2EZ, line 37 and line 38 must equal the total amount of your refund on Schedule X, line 11. If the total of the amended Form 540 2EZ, line 37 and line 38 do not equal Schedule X, line 11, the FTB will issue a paper check.

**Dependent Exemption Credit with No ID** – For taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2018, taxpayers claiming a dependent exemption credit for a dependent who is ineligible for an SSN and a federal ITIN may provide alternative information to the FTB to identify the dependent. To claim the dependent exemption credit, taxpayers complete form FTB 3568, attach the form and required documentation to their tax return, and write "no id" in the SSN field of line 8, Dependents, on Form 540 2EZ. For each dependent being claimed that does not have an SSN and an ITIN, a form FTB 3568 must be provided along with supporting documentation.

If you are amending a return beginning with taxable year 2018 to claim dependent exemption credit, complete an amended Form 540 2EZ, and write "no id" in the SSN field on the Dependents line, and attach Schedule X. To complete Schedule X, check box m for "Other" on Part II, line 1, and write the explanation "Claim dependent exemption credit with no id and form FTB 3568 is attached" on Part II, line 2. Make sure to attach form FTB 3568 and the required supporting documents in addition to the amended return and Schedule X. If you do not claim the dependent exemption credit on the original 2021 tax return, you may amend the 2021 tax return following the same procedure used to amend your previous year amended tax returns beginning with taxable year 2018. For more information, get FTB Notice 2021-01.

## Purpose

Use Form 540 2EZ to amend your original or previously filed California resident income tax return. Check the box at the top of Form 540 2EZ indicating AMENDED return. Submit the completed amended Form 540 2EZ and Schedule X along with all required schedules and supporting forms.

## When to File

Generally, if you filed federal Form 1040-X, Amended U.S. Individual Income Tax Return, file an amended California tax return within six months unless the changes do not affect your California tax liability. File an amended return only after you have filed your original or previously filed California tax return.

## California Statute of Limitations

**Original tax return was filed on or before April 15th:**

If you are making a claim for refund, file an amended tax return within four years from the original due date of the tax return or within one year from the date of overpayment, whichever period expires later.

**Original tax return was filed within the extension period (April 15th – October 15th):**

If you are making a claim for refund, file an amended tax return within four years from the date the original tax return was filed or within one year from the date of overpayment, whichever period expires later.

**Original tax return was filed after October 15th:**

If you are making a claim for refund, file an amended tax return within four years from the original due date of the tax return (April 15th) or within one year from the date of overpayment, whichever period expires later.

**If you are filing your amended tax return after the normal statute of limitation period** (four years after the due date of the original tax return), attach a statement explaining why the normal statute of limitations does not apply.

**If you are filing your amended return in response to a billing notice you received**, you will continue to receive billing notices until your amended tax return is accepted. You may file an informal claim for refund even though the full amount due including tax, penalty, and interest has not yet been paid. After the full amount due has been paid, you have the right to appeal to the Office of Tax Appeals at [ota.ca.gov](http://ota.ca.gov) or to file suit in court if your claim for refund is disallowed.

To file an informal claim for refund, check box l for "Informal claim" on Schedule X, Part II, line 1 and mail the claim to:

FRANCHISE TAX BOARD  
PO BOX 942840  
SACRAMENTO CA 94240-0040

## Financially Disabled Taxpayers

The statute of limitations for filing claims for refunds is suspended during periods when a taxpayer is "financially disabled." You are considered "financially disabled" when you are unable to manage your financial affairs due to a medically determinable physical or mental impairment that is deemed to be either a terminal impairment or is expected to last for a continuous period of not less than 12 months. You **are not** considered "financially disabled" during any period that your spouse/RDP or any other person is legally authorized to act on your behalf on financial matters. For more information, get form FTB 1564, Financially Disabled – Suspension of the Statute of Limitations.

## Federal Notices

If you were notified of an error on your federal income tax return that changed your AGI, you may need to amend your California income tax return for that year.

If the IRS examines and changes your federal income tax return, and you owe additional tax, report these changes to the FTB within six months. You do not need to inform the FTB if the changes do not increase your California tax liability. If the changes made by the IRS result in a refund due, you must file a claim for refund within two years. Use an amended Form 540 2EZ and Schedule X to make any changes to your California income tax returns previously filed.

Include a copy of the final federal determination, along with all underlying data and schedules that explain or support the federal adjustment.

**Note:** Most penalties assessed by the IRS also apply under California law. If you are including penalties in a payment with your amended tax return, see Schedule X, line 8a instructions.

## Children With Investment Income

If your child was required to file form FTB 3800, Tax Computation for Certain Children with Unearned Income, and your taxable income has changed, review your child's tax return to see if you need to file an amended tax return. Get form FTB 3800 for more information.

## Contacting the Franchise Tax Board

If you have not received a refund within six months of filing your amended return, **do not** file a duplicate amended return for the same year. For information on the status of your refund, you may write to:

FRANCHISE TAX BOARD  
PO BOX 942840  
SACRAMENTO CA 94240-0040

For telephone assistance, see General Phone Service on page 63.

## Filing Status

Your filing status for California must be the same as the filing status you used on your federal income tax return, unless you are in an RDP. If you are an RDP and file single for federal, you must file married/RDP filing jointly or married/RDP filing separately for California. If you entered into a same-sex marriage, your filing status for California would generally be the same as the filing status that was used for federal. If you are a same-sex married

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individual or an RDP and file head of household for federal, you may file head of household for California only if you meet the requirements to be considered unmarried or considered not in a registered domestic partnership.

**Changing Your Filing Status** – If you changed your filing status on your federal amended tax return, also change your filing status for California.

**Married/RDP Filing Jointly to Married/RDP Filing Separately** – You cannot change from married/RDP filing jointly to married/RDP filing separately after the due date of the tax return.

**Exception:** A married couple who meets the exception for filing a separate tax return shown above may change from joint to separate tax returns after the due date of the tax return.

**Filing Separate Tax Returns to Married/RDP Filing Jointly** – If you or your spouse/RDP (or both of you) filed a separate tax return, you generally can change to a joint tax return any time within four years from the original due date of the separate tax return(s). To change to a joint tax return, you and your spouse/RDP must have been legally married or in an RDP on the last day of the taxable year.

To amend from separate tax returns to a joint tax return, follow Form 540 2EZ instructions to complete only one amended tax return. Both you and your spouse/RDP must sign the amended joint tax return.

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# Need Assistance? We're Here To Help!

Want to e-file?

Have a question?

Want to check on your refund?

Need a tax form?



## Online Services

Go to [ftb.ca.gov](http://ftb.ca.gov) for:

- **MyFTB** – view payments, balance due, and withholding information.
- **Web Pay** to pay income taxes. Choose your payment date up to one year in advance.
- **CalFile** – e-file your personal income tax return.
- **Refund Status** – find out when we authorize your refund.
- **Installment Agreement** – request to make monthly payments.
- **Subscription Services** – sign up to receive emails on a variety of tax topics.
- Tax forms and publications.
- FTB legal notices, rulings, and regulations.
- FTB's analysis of pending legislation.
- Internal procedure manuals to learn how we administer law.

## Franchise Tax Board Privacy Notice on Collection

The privacy and security of your personal information is of the utmost importance to us. We want you to have the highest confidence in the integrity, efficiency, and fairness of our state tax system.

### Your Rights and Responsibilities

You have a right to know what types of information we gather, how we use it, and to whom we may provide it. Information collected is subject to the California Information Practices Act, Civil Code Sections 1798-1798.78, except as provided in R&TC Section 19570.

If you meet certain requirements, you must file a valid tax return and related documents.

You must provide your social security number or other identifying number on your tax return and related documents for identification. (R&TC Sections 18501, 18621, and 18624)

### Reasons for Information Requests

We may request additional information to verify and collect the correct amount of tax. (R&TC Section 19504) You must provide all requested information, unless indicated as "optional."

### Consequences of Noncompliance

We charge penalties and interest, if you:

- Meet income requirements but do not file a valid tax return.
- Do not provide the information we request.
- Provide false information.

We may also disallow your claimed exemptions, exclusions, credits, deductions, or adjustments. If you provide false information, you may be subject to civil penalties and criminal prosecution. Noncompliance can increase your tax liability or delay or reduce any tax refund.

### Disclosure of Information

We will not disclose your personal information, unless authorized by law. We may disclose your tax information to:

- The Internal Revenue Service.
- Other states' income tax officials.
- California government agencies and officials.
- Third parties to determine or collect your tax liabilities.
- Your authorized representative(s).

If you owe taxes, we may disclose your balance due as part of our collection process to: employers, financial institutions, county recorders, process agents, or other asset holders.

### Responsibility for the Records

The director of the Processing Services Bureau maintains Franchise Tax Board's records. You may review your records and bring any inaccuracies to our attention. You can obtain information about your records by:

### Phone

800.852.5711 (within the United States)  
916.845.6500 (outside of the United States)

### Mail

DISCLOSURE OFFICER MS A181  
FRANCHISE TAX BOARD  
PO BOX 1468  
SACRAMENTO CA 95812-1468

To learn more about our Privacy Policy Statement, go to [ftb.ca.gov/privacy](http://ftb.ca.gov/privacy)



## Automated Phone Service

Order tax forms and get recorded answers to your tax questions 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, at no charge to you. Call us at 800.338.0505, follow the recorded instructions, and enter the 3-digit code, listed below, when prompted.

### Code Frequently Asked Questions:

- 100 Do I need to file a tax return?
- 111 Which form should I use?
- 201 How can I get an extension to file?
- 203 What is the nonrefundable renter's credit and how do I qualify?
- 204 I never received a federal Form W-2, what do I do?
- 215 Who qualifies me to use the head of household filing status?
- 506 How do I get information about my Form 1099-G?
- 619 How do I report a change of address?

### Code California Tax Forms and Publications:

- 900 California Resident Income Tax Booklet (includes Form 540)
- 965 Form 540 2EZ Tax Booklet
- 903 Schedule CA (540), California Adjustments – Residents
- 907 Form 540-ES, Estimated Tax for Individuals
- 908 Schedule X, California Explanation of Amended Return Changes
- 914 California Nonresident or Part-Year Resident Income Tax Booklet (includes Form 540NR)
- 948 FTB 1131 EN-SP, Franchise Tax Board Privacy Notice on Collection
- 932 FTB 3506, Child and Dependent Care Expenses Credit
- 938 FTB 3514, California Earned Income Tax Credit
- 921 FTB 3519, Payment for Automatic Extension for Individuals
- 922 FTB 3525, Substitute for Form W-2, Wage and Tax Statement
- 939 FTB 3532, Head of Household Filing Status Schedule
- 949 FTB 3567, Installment Agreement Request
- 943 FTB 4058, California Taxpayers' Bill of Rights
- 946 FTB Pub. 1008, Federal Tax Adjustments and Your Notification Responsibilities to California
- 934 FTB Pub. 1540, Tax Information for Head of Household Filing Status

### General Phone Service

Telephone assistance is available year-round from 7 a.m. until 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, except holidays. Hours subject to change.

Telephone: 800.852.5711 from within the United States  
916.845.6500 from outside the United States  
800.829.1040 for federal tax questions, call the IRS

### California

#### Relay

Service: 711 or 800.735.2929 for persons with hearing or speaking limitations.

### Asistencia En Español

Asistencia telefónica está disponible durante todo el año desde las 7 a.m. hasta las 5 p.m. de lunes a viernes, excepto días feriados. Las horas están sujetas a cambios.

Teléfono: 800.852.5711 dentro de los Estados Unidos  
916.845.6500 fuera de los Estados Unidos  
800.829.1040 para preguntas sobre impuestos federales, llame al IRS

### Servicio de

#### Retransmisión

de California: 711 o 800.735.2929 para personas con limitaciones auditivas o del habla.

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