

Moderator's Guide

Due diligence documentation requirements for EITC, CTC, AOTC and HOH

Moderator's Guide

I. Welcome and Introductions:

A. Introduction of the moderator

Good morning/afternoon. My name is <first name> and I will be your moderator for this session. I work for the Internal Revenue Service as a social scientist. Today I will be leading a discussion to get your feedback about due diligence documentation for paid preparers.

B. What is a moderator?

My job as a moderator is to:

- Help guide the flow of conversation
- Make sure everyone's comments are heard
- Ensure that questions about the topic are covered

You will see me referring to this outline during our session. The outline includes all issues I need to raise with the group and helps me keep the discussion on track. It is important that we cover all the issues. Therefore, I may have to break off the conversation in order to move on to another area in the guide.

C. Ground Rules

Before we begin, I'd like to review some ground rules for today's discussion.

- For the IRS to speak with the public, we are required to have approval from the Office of Management and Budget. Their approval number for this project is 1545-1349. If you have any comments regarding this study, please write to: IRS, Special Services Committee, SE:W:CAR:MP:T:M:S – Room 6129, 1111 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20224.”
- There are no known risks to you for taking part in this focus group session. All the data the IRS collects will be kept private to the extent allowed by law. Your

name will never be linked to your comments, nor will it appear in any written reports or publications.

- Please speak just one at a time so everyone has a chance to participate.
- We would like to hear from everyone in the group, but you don't have to answer every question.
- There are no right or wrong answers in today's discussion. We expect to hear differences in how people see things.
- Feel free to disagree. The purpose of a group session is for us to learn things in group interchanges that we don't get out of one-on-one discussions.
- Your participation is voluntary. Therefore, at any point in time you may leave the session.
- The session will last one hour.

D. Introduction of Participants

To begin, I'd like each of you to introduce yourself using your first name only.

II. Discussion

As I mentioned at the start of the session, our goal today is to gather information about due diligence documentation. Specifically, I'm going to ask about the documents you request and the documents you retain for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), the Child Tax Credit (CTC), Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC), American Opportunity Tax Credit (AOTC), Credits for Other Dependents (ODC), and Head of Household (HOH).

NOTE: *Reiterate points about differences of opinion and not reaching consensus.*

A. Requesting documents - Existing Clients

For EXISTING/RETURNING clients who claim benefits (EITC, CTC, ACTC, AOTC, ODC, and HOH) you are required to complete Form 8867: *Paid Preparer's Due Diligence Checklist*:

1. What documents do you request the client bring with them?
2. Why do you request they bring these documents?
3. What documents do clients have difficulty obtaining?

4. How did you decide these documents are what you need for due diligence?
PROBE: (1) IRS regulations
(2) education / training
(3) software manufacturer
(4) business practice
5. How do you communicate with EXISTING/RETURNING clients (prior to them coming in) about the documents they may need to bring?

B. Requesting documents - New Clients

For NEW clients for whom you discover you will need to complete Form 8867: *Paid Preparer's Due Diligence Checklist* (EITC, CTC, ACTC, AOTC, ODC, and HOH):

6. What additional documents do you request these clients provide?

REWORDED: In terms of documents you request, do you treat new clients any differently than existing clients?
7. Why do you request these additional documents?

C. Requesting documents - Recertification

For clients for whom you discover need to RECERTIFY:

8. What additional documents do you request these clients provide?
9. Why do you request these additional documents?

D. Document Retention

10. What client documents related to due diligence do you retain?
11. Why do you retain these documents?
PROBE: (1) Is the retention of these documents specific to due diligence?
(2) Is the retention of these documents part of your own record keeping?
12. Why do you retain these documents?
PROBE: (1) IRS regulations
(2) education / training
(3) software manufacturer
(4) business practice

13. Do you retain different documents based on the type of client (Existing, New, Recertification)?

E. Information Sources

14. What sources of information do you use to determine what documentation you may need for due diligence?

PROBE: (1) Treasury Department Circular No. 230: *Regulations Governing Practice before the Internal Revenue Service.*

(2) 886-H-EIC

(3) 886-H-HOH

15. What sources of information do you use to determine what documentation you may need to retain for due diligence?

III. Closing

Thinking about our discussion this afternoon, is there anything else you would like to share regarding any of the topics we discussed.

Thank you very much for coming and sharing your ideas with us—we really appreciate your time.

Recruitment and reminder emails

Email #1: Focus Group Sign-up Confirmation

[Email Subject:] Confirmation: IRS Nationwide Tax Forum Virtual Focus Groups



Greetings,

Thank you for your interest in the 2021 IRS Nationwide Tax Forum Virtual Focus Groups.

You are confirmed for the following session:

Focus Group Topic: Due diligence documentation requirements for EITC, CTC, AOTC and HOH

Date: <ENTER DATE>

Time: 12:30 PM – 1:30 PM EST

On the day of the Virtual Focus Group, please join using the information below:

Conference Number: 888-331-8226

Access Code: 6920803

Thank you and we look forward to your participation! If you have any questions, please contact us at the email address below.

Internal Revenue Service
W&I Strategies and Solutions
Email: wi.research@irs.gov

Email #2: Focus Group is Full – Other Dates Available

[Email Subject:] Available Sessions: IRS Nationwide Tax Forum Virtual Focus Groups



Greetings,

Thank you for your interest in the 2021 IRS Nationwide Tax Forum Virtual Focus Groups.

The focus group session you requested: Due diligence documentation requirements for EITC, CTC, AOTC and HOH is full but other dates available. If you are interested in one of the dates listed below, please let us know.

Available Dates:

<ENTER AVAILABLE DATES>

Time: 12:30 PM – 1:30 PM EST

Thank you and we look forward to hearing from you.

Internal Revenue Service
W&I Strategies and Solutions
Email: wi.research@irs.gov

Email #3: Focus Group Session is Full

[Email Subject:] Focus Group Session Unavailable: IRS Nationwide Tax Forum Virtual Focus Groups



Greetings,

Thank you for your interest in the 2021 IRS Nationwide Tax Forum Virtual Focus Groups.

Unfortunately, the focus group session you requested: Due diligence documentation requirements for EITC, CTC, AOTC and HOH is full.

Thank you,

Internal Revenue Service
W&I Strategies and Solutions
Email: wi.research@irs.gov

Email #4: Focus Group Session Reminder (1 day before)

[Email Subject:] Focus Group Session Reminder <ENTER DATE>, 12:30 – 1:30 PM EST



Greetings,

This is a reminder that you are confirmed for the following focus group session:

Focus Group Topic: Due diligence documentation requirements for EITC, CTC, AOTC and HOH

Date: <ENTER DATE>

Time: 12:30 PM – 1:30 PM EST

Please call in to tomorrow's session using the information below.

Conference Number: 888-331-8226

Access Code: 6920803

Thank you and we look forward to your participation!

Internal Revenue Service
W&I Strategies and Solutions
Email: wi.research@irs.gov

The Paperwork Reduction Act requires that the IRS display an OMB Control Number on all public information requests. The OMB Control Number is 1545-1349. We estimate the time required to be one hour. Also, if you have any comments regarding the time estimates associated with this sturdy or suggestions on making the process simpler, please write to Internal Revenue Service, Special Services Section, SE:W:CAR:MP:T:M:S – Room 6129, 1111 Constitution Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20224.

Your willingness to participate in IRS conducted focus groups is completely voluntary.

Email #5: Focus Group Session Reminder (1 hour before)

[Email Subject:] Focus Group Session Reminder <ENTER DATE>, 12:30 – 1:30 PM EST



Greetings,

This is a reminder that you are confirmed for the following focus group session:

Focus Group Topic: Due diligence documentation requirements for EITC, CTC, AOTC and HOH

Date: <ENTER DATE>

Time: 12:30 PM – 1:30 PM EST

Please call in to today's session using the information below.

Conference Number: 888-331-8226

Access Code: 6920803

Thank you and we look forward to your participation!

Internal Revenue Service

W&I Strategies and Solutions

Email: wi.research@irs.gov

The Paperwork Reduction Act requires that the IRS display an OMB Control Number on all public information requests. The OMB Control Number is 1545-1349. We estimate the time required to be one hour. Also, if you have any comments regarding the time estimates associated with this sturdy or suggestions on making the process simpler, please write to Internal Revenue Service, Special Services Section, SE:W:CAR:MP:T:M:S – Room 6129, 1111 Constitution Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20224.

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