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Preparing for your Tax Interview

Many clients choose to make an appointment to discuss the preparation of their tax returns. While this is certainly a good opportunity to “catch up” and ask questions, I want to be sure that time is used most efficiently and effectively, and have prepared this document to help you be as prepared as possible. **Being prepared is one very good way of keeping fees down to a minimum.**

What to bring?

- All of your W-2's from Work (All copies please);
- All 1099's and 1098's from banks, credit unions and brokerage companies;
- All K-1's from investments in businesses, partnerships, estates or trusts;
- If you have sold any marketable securities, please bring **both** the sales information as well as your original cost basis for each transaction;
- If you have bought or sold (or both) a home or other real property this year, please bring **all escrow closing statements**;
- If you have purchased a car or truck for your business, please bring the purchase contract;
- Please bring a summary total of charitable contributions (both for cash as well as non-cash contributions);
- Please bring the amount paid for real estate tax and personal property tax on cars and boats;
- Please bring a summary of any job related expenses;
- Please bring a summary of any medical expenses;
- Please bring the **Tax Organizer** (completed as best as you can).

How Long Does the Interview Take?

- In general, 1 – 2 hours is usually sufficient. When you make the appointment, the secretary will tell you how much time is being allocated.
- During the interview I will ask you dozens of questions while obtaining this years' data. The purposes of my questions are to: (1) obtain the information necessary to complete an accurate and complete set of tax returns; (2) ferret out additional deductions that you may have overlooked; (3) give you some tax planning ideas; (4) answer any questions that you may have.
- I may not be able to finish your tax returns during the interview process, and I may ask you to call me or send a fax or an email after our interview to clarify or provide additional information, or to provide copies of needed information, or I may ask you for permission to contact other parties who can provide me with needed information (such as brokers or bankers, partners, etc.).
- If you bring in scraps of paper and try to summarize your expenses while we do the interview, or ask me or my staff to summarize it for you, it will increase our preparation time, and you will be charged for this time. Remember: being well-organized and well-prepared enhances our efficiency, which will keep your fee as low as possible.

How Much Can I expect to Pay for Tax Return Preparation Services?

- As with all of my professional services, the fee is generally based upon the amount of time needed to prepare your tax returns, and is influenced by the level of complexity and expertise.
- Regardless, there is a ***minimum fee*** for all individual income tax returns in the amount of \$390, plus the out-of-pocket computer processing cost of \$60, for a total minimum fee of \$450; the minimum fee for an LLC or a partnership tax return is \$690; for a corporation, \$825

Do's and Don't's For Your Interview:

- Do come prepared and well-organized, with your information summarized;
- Do feel free to call and ask for another tax organizer if you need it;
- Do feel free to arrive a few minutes early for your appointment (we will be happy to treat you to a cup of coffee, tea or a soft drink);
- Do feel free to refer friends, family and associates. I know that a satisfied client is my very best referral source;
- Do plan on being treated professionally, courteously and promptly;
- Don't hesitate to skip the interview process by dropping off or mailing in your tax return information. We will always contact you if we have any questions;
- Don't hesitate to ask questions!

Parking: Often, there is metered parking to be found along Ventura Boulevard. But, if there is none available, please park in the parking structure, and be sure to bring your ticket upstairs with you so that we can validate your parking.

