



CENTER FOR TAXPAYER RIGHTS

Low Income Taxpayer Clinics in the U.S.

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A Brief History

Congress created Low Income Taxpayer Clinics (LITCs) in 1998

The program is now administered by the Taxpayer Advocate Service (TAS), an independent part of the US Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

It was first administered by the IRS

Note that the IRS administers two free income tax return preparation programs





The First LITCs

- Before the codification of the LITC program in 1998, there were a handful of LITCs
- 13 at academic institutions
- 3 at independent non-profits





LITCs Today

- In 2023, there are 129 clinics:
- LITCs are housed at 42 academic institutions (law schools and business schools)
- LITCs are in 25 independent community non-profit organizations
- LITCs are in 62 legal services programs (organizations that are multi-practice law firms for low income individuals)

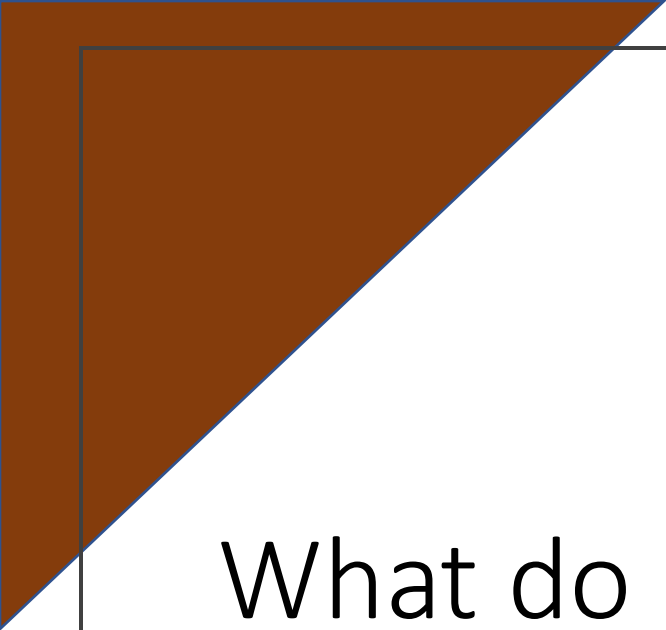




What do LITCs do?

- *Representation* of low income taxpayers administratively and before the courts. LITC attorneys and 1,211 pro bono attorneys who donated 46,309 hours to help clients without charge, in 2021:
 - Represented 20,358 taxpayers
 - Consulted with 15,901 taxpayers
 - Secured more than \$6.7 million in refunds (5,324,021,000 CLP)
 - Reduced or corrected \$62 million in liabilities (49,267,060,000 CLP)
 - Handled more than 1,400 cases in the U.S. Tax Court





What do LITCs do?

- *Education* about taxpayer rights and responsibilities.
- In 2021:
 - LITCs conducted 990 education sessions
 - Reached 143,260 taxpayers
 - Provided 444 trainings
 - Reached 21,344 partners at community organizations and agencies that work with the same clientele






What do LITCs do?

- *Advocacy* on behalf of low income clients
- This includes:
 - Submitting more than 150 issues through TAS's internal issue identification system
 - Submitting written comments to the IRS on proposed rules, regulations, and forms
 - Publishing in blogs, the tax press, and law reviews
 - Litigating significant issues
 - Filing amicus briefs





What kinds of cases do LITCs handle?

In 2021, as percentage of total cases worked by all LITCs:

43% resolved tax collection

16% brought non-filers into compliance

15% general refund issues


22% family-based refundable credits

9% other credits

19% proof of income

14% filing status and exemptions





What kinds of clients do LITCs represent?

- Statutorily, 90% of an LITC's clients' income must be at or below 250% of the federal poverty guidelines. Family of 4: \$75,000 per year (59,564,250 CLP)
- LITCs may also represent specific populations: survivors of domestic abuse, homeless taxpayers, taxpayers whose primary language isn't English, immigrant taxpayers
- LITC attorneys may partner with other attorneys practicing consumer law, bankruptcy, immigration, domestic relations, and public benefits to provide holistic representation



Resources

- [Every Taxpayer Counts: Nina Olson's Impact on Low Income Taxpayer Clinics](#)
- [The LITC Program Office Annual Report](#)
- [List of 2023 LITCs](#)
- [Tax Court calendar call participants](#)
- [IRC 7526](#)
- [Taxation with Representation](#)
- [Social Justice and the Low Income Taxpayer](#)

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