



Riverside County DPSS First Annual Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Outreach Campaign

Program(s) Impacted

ALL Programs

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Purpose The purpose of this Department Memorandum is to inform staff about the collaborative efforts of DPSS and the IRS to develop an effective Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) outreach campaign in Riverside County for the 2002 tax year.

About EITC and VITA

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) promotes work, family and local economic development. It's a tax credit for people who work. The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program is run by the IRS and provides free tax filing assistance to low-income taxpayers.

Why outreach is needed in Riverside County

Research shows that many people do not claim the EITC because they are either unaware of the credit or they complete the wrong tax form. Statistics provided by the IRS revealed that there was \$307.6 million dollars of potential lost revenue to Riverside County in the 1999 filing season from returns filed that were eligible for the EITC but failed to claim it.

Only six VITA sites would have been available in Riverside County if DPSS had not become involved. All are located in the Western part of the county, five in Riverside and one in Norco. DPSS decided to sponsor twelve VITA sites, one at each of the GAIN offices. See Attachment 1 for GAIN VITA Sites and Attachment 2 for Non-DPSS VITA Sites.

Thirteen GAIN staff members completed the VITA training and will be assisting **DPSS Customers ONLY** in completing and filling their tax returns

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DPSS Commitment DPSS has made a commitment to help the workforce of Riverside County claim the tax credits they've earned. Our goal is to get the word out to low-wage workers that they may qualify for significant tax benefits.

Campaign Steps These are the steps DPSS will take in 2003 for a successful campaign:

Step	Action	See Attachment
1	Informational flier mailed to 26,000 customers with the January CW7.	3 & 4
2	Informational flier mailed to 26,000 customers with the February CW7. Receptionists in all DPSS offices are to make these available in the lobby area for customers Request copies from GPSU.	5
3	Posters are to be displayed in the lobby area of all DPSS offices through the end of the tax filling season. Post at least one English and one Spanish. Request original size posters (11x17) from the GPSU.	6
4	Handout on how EITC is reported and treated is to be given to all customers who have their income taxes prepared by DPSS.	7
6	Additional IRS tax forms, publications and booklets are available in the lobby area of all GAIN offices.	

Additional Information IRS was able to provide laptops or desktops to each of our GAIN staff member along with a printer. Staff completed their training on February 3rd. Our marketing efforts have steadily increased the volume of customers serviced. IRS will be able to provide us with data on the number of returns processed by DPSS and the refund amounts issued. We expect to show a significant impact this year and hope to continue to provide this much needed service in the years to come.

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Questions

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