



## **2015 GENERAL TAX INFORMATION FOR AU PAIRS**

Au Pair in America realizes that the issue of taxes can be confusing for you. For general tax questions, please review the information below.

Au Pair in America cannot be held responsible for the interpretation of the information within this document, or any changes to IRS rules or forms that may occur. Neither Au Pair in America, nor its Community Counselors, can provide any official tax advice. We recommend that you contact a tax professional if you have any specific questions regarding your own tax situation.

This document is intended to address federal taxes and does not address au pair status under other laws such as the Fair Labor Standards Act.

### **Will I owe taxes on my weekly stipends?**

The IRS\* (Internal Revenue Service) considers you, as an au pair, to be an employee of the host family. The weekly stipend you receive from your host family(ies) is considered by the IRS to be taxable as earned income and requires you to file U.S. individual income tax returns. You will owe taxes if the total stipend earned is more than \$4,000. The \$4,000 is the personal allowable exemption in 2015.

### **Why do I need to file taxes?**

United States law requires individuals to file a tax return and to report income during a calendar year. If you choose not to file a return and pay taxes, it could prevent you from obtaining a visa in the future. If you are planning to apply for a U.S. visa in the future, or for a change of status, you may be required to pay any unpaid taxes plus penalties and interest charges. If your host family(ies) report or claims payments to you as their au pair, then you must file your own tax return.

### **When do I need to file a tax return?**

A federal U.S. tax return for the total amount of stipend earned in 2015 should be filed with the IRS no later than April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016. This should be submitted to the IRS along with payment for any taxes owed. (For example: on April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016, tax returns are due for stipends (wages) earned between January 1, and December 31, 2015). If you do not file by the deadline of April 18, 2016 you may be subject to a penalty as well as interest on the tax owed.

### **How will I know how much money I made in a calendar year?**

You should keep a record of the weekly stipend payments you receive from your host family(ies) during the year. We have prepared a "stipend payment form" which you can use, or you can create your own form for keeping track of the stipend amounts you receive.

<http://www.aupairinamerica.com/pdf/stipend-tracking-sheet.pdf>

## How much will I owe for taxes?

The amount of income tax you may owe depends on when you arrived in the U.S.

Most au pairs who have been in the U.S. for at least 21 weeks in a calendar year will meet the minimum requirement to pay taxes (16 weeks for au pair Extraordinaires). The exemption deduction is \$4,000 for 2015 (per the 2015 IRS 1040NR-EZ instruction book, page 8). You are **not required to file** a U.S. federal individual income tax return if your U.S. source of earnings (total stipend amount) is an **amount less than the personal exemption amount (\$4,000 for 2015)** (Refer to [Publication 501](#)).

**How do I file taxes? –Step by Step Guide.** *This guide is intended to give general instructions, and should not substitute for the advice or instructions given by the IRS or a certified accountant.*

**Step 1: Get a Social Security number or Tax ID number.** The purpose of the social security card is for employment authorization under the terms of the au pair regulations. If you do not already have one, please consult the information below and make sure to apply for a social security card.

### Information on securing a Social Security Number:

[http://www.aupairinamerica.com/resources/life\\_in\\_the\\_us/procedure\\_4.asp](http://www.aupairinamerica.com/resources/life_in_the_us/procedure_4.asp)

<http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/International-Taxpayers/Au-Pairs>

**Step 2: Calculate the total stipend amounts you received during the previous calendar year.** Ideally you have kept track of your stipends using the Au Pair in America stipend form. If not, please calculate your stipend amounts using the number of weeks you worked as an au pair in the United States the previous calendar year and multiply that by the stipend amount you received. Remember that you begin receiving your stipend one week after your arrival in the U.S.

**An example** – see sample form.

You were here for 31 weeks in 2015 and received a weekly stipend of \$195.75\* for those 31 weeks. Your total would be  $31 \times \$195.75 = \$6,068.25 = \$6,068$  (always round to the nearest dollar amount). This rate will vary based upon when you arrived in 2015 and what program you were participating in when you earned the stipend – Au Pair, EduCare, Extraordinaire. You would then subtract the personal exemption amount for 2015, (\$4,000) from your total stipend amount and would get a total of \$2,068. This is your taxable amount.

Once you determine your taxable income, you should then check the 2015 instruction booklet <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/i1040nre.pdf> (see link, starting on page 22 to see how much tax you owe based on your taxable amount). For the amount in the sample above, the tax would be \$206.

**Step 3: Fill out 1040NR-EZ form for calendar year 2015**

<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f1040nre.pdf>

This is a link to instruction booklet: <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/i1040nre.pdf>

Below are some helpful tips for filling out the 2015 tax form.

1. Enter the total stipend amount you received in 2015 on line 3, line 7, line 10 and line 12. This would be the number of weeks you were in the U.S. in 2015 multiplied by the amount of weekly stipend received each week, keeping in mind you may not have received a stipend in the week you arrived to the U.S.
2. You should not have any itemized deductions, so the amount entered on line 11 would be '0'.
3. Enter the 2015 exemption amount of \$4,000 on line 13.
4. Subtract the exemption amount (\$4,000) from your income reported on line 12 and put on line 14. This is your taxable total amount.
5. Look up the taxable income amount in the tax tables which are included in the instructions (starting on page 22) to see the amount you will owe in taxes. Put this amount on line 15, line 17 and line 25 of form 1040NR-EZ. This would be the amount that you will pay to the IRS.
6. **Don't forget to sign the form at the bottom – the form is not valid without your signature!**
7. You must fill out the other side of the form (page 2)
8. Put your home country on line A
9. Put your home country on line B
10. Lines C, D, and F should all say 'no'
11. For section E put 'J-1'
12. In section G, you should start with your arrival date in the U.S. (in 2015) and list any dates that you left the country for any trips (either your own vacation or your host family's vacation). Then add up all the days that you were in the U.S. during 2015 and enter this number in section H.
13. If you filed a tax return in the previous year, answer 'yes' on line I and put the form number you filed (probably 1040-NR-EZ 2014).

(See sample 1040NR-EZ form)

If you are outside the United States and have tax questions you can call the International Taxpayer Service Center at (1)267.941.1000 (not a toll-free number). They are helpful and can provide numbers to make a tax payment by phone.

**Filing a tax return and payments:** Whether you are filing your taxes from the U.S. or back in your home country, all tax returns and checks should be mailed to:

Internal Revenue Service  
P.O. Box 1303  
Charlotte, NC 28201 – 1303  
U.S.A.

**Note: If you make an online payment by credit card or pay by phone, then you must mail your tax return to:**

Department of the Treasury  
Internal Revenue Service  
Austin, TX 73301-0215  
U.S.A

**DO NOT FORGET TO SIGN YOUR INCOME TAX RETURN  
MAKE A COPY OF YOUR TAX RETURN AND PAYMENT**

If you are in the United States, taxes can be paid by personal check (please ensure your bank account is open if you have returned home) or via money order in US dollars. Make your check or money order payable to “United States Treasury”. Write 2015 Form 1040NR-EZ and your name, address and social security number on your check or money order.

Taxes can also be paid online. To pay your taxes online or for more information go to [www.irs.gov/payments](http://www.irs.gov/payments). You can pay using either one of the following methods:

- IRS Direct Pay for online transfers from your checking or savings account at a US bank or other financial institution in the United States. There is no extra cost to do this.
- By credit or debit card. Click on “pay by card”. To pay using a debit or credit card you have to call one of the service providers listed below. There is a small fee charged for this convenience that varies by provider, type of card and payment amount.
  - Official Payments Corporation (1-888-872-9829) or [www.officialpayments.com](http://www.officialpayments.com)
  - Link2Gov Corporation (1-888-729-10400 or [www.PAY104.com](http://www.PAY104.com))
  - WorldPay (1-844-729-8298) or [www.payUSAtax.com](http://www.payUSAtax.com)

If you have returned to your home country before tax filing is due, you can submit them from home. For assistance with paying taxes from home, you can contact the International Taxpayer Service Center at (1) 267-941-1000. They are helpful and can even assist with making tax payments by phone or online by credit card.

Additional Resources

IRS information for au pairs:

<http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/International-Taxpayers/Au-Pairs>

For au pairs submitting a tax return, the following services may be helpful. Please note that Au Pair in America is not recommending and cannot guarantee these services.

- [www.HRBlock.com](http://www.HRBlock.com)
- [www.CompleteTax.com](http://www.CompleteTax.com)
- <http://www.rttax.com> or <http://www.taxback.com>
- <https://www.taxact.com>

We hope that this information is useful for your tax planning purposes. If you have questions, please consult the resources listed in this information sheet for their specific situations.

- Please note: While federal income tax is required, you may also be required to pay state income tax depending upon what state you lived in when you received your weekly stipend. As each state has different regulations, it will be important for you or your host family to check on your state's tax revenue website for specifics. Some online tax services have a combined service for Federal and State tax filing - <https://www.taxact.com> – is an example of this.

\*IRS (Internal Revenue Service) – Government agency responsible for tax collection and tax law enforcement.

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