

Ten reasons why illegal immigrants should file income tax returns

The very well managed About.com site, by Jennifer and Peter Wipf, on immigration issues has a checklist of reasons why it is in the interest of undocumented workers to file income tax returns. Bob Alcorn, a Dallas CPW, prepared the list. Here is a summary.

According to Alcorn, "Non-citizens who reside in the U.S. for more than 183 days [generally] meet the definition of a 'tax resident,' or a 'resident for tax purposes.' They are "subject to the tax laws as if they were citizens (with some minor differences)."

1. It's the Law.

2. Proof of Presence:

This proof may be required if and when any future guest worker program or amnesty provisions are made.

3. Proof of Spouse's Presence and/or Spousal Relationship

Tax returns indicate your marital status (single, married, head of household), thus possibly later improving or proving a spouse's eligibility for any guest worker or amnesty claims.

4. Proof of Dependents' Presence and/or Relationship

5. Proof of Income and Self-Sufficiency

6. Possible Eligibility for Tax Benefits/Credits

Tax returns allow you to receive certain tax benefits - such as the Child Tax Credit, including the refundable portion of the Additional Child Tax Credit if you otherwise qualify.

7. Tax Payer Identification Number Eligibility

Filing tax returns provides a legitimate basis for getting an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number. Having a legitimate TIN is actually much less of a red flag than using a fake Social Security number at work or for finances and taxes.

8. Proof of Income as Basis for a Mortgage and Other Credit

9. Demonstration of Good Moral Character

In any immigrant legalization process, the applicant needs to demonstrate "good moral character."

10. It's Good to be Prepared, Just in Case