



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bethpage Offers Qualifying Taxpayers Four Different Free Tax Filing Options for 2024

Bethpage, NY – February 22, 2024 - Qualifying taxpayers will have four different ways to file their taxes for free this year, thanks to Bethpage Federal Credit Union, the only financial institution to offer the IRS' Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program on Long Island. Now in its 21st year, Bethpage's VITA program is open to all eligible Long Islanders, including non-Bethpage members.

The First option available to taxpayers is the Bethpage Virtual VITA program where taxpayers will meet with Bethpage's trained volunteers virtually, who will then prepare and e-file the tax returns. Virtual appointments will take place on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from February 1st - April 11th 2024. Pre-scheduled appointments are required and can be made on Bethpage's website at lovebethpage.com/vita

The Second option available to taxpayers is the Bethpage Traditional VITA program where taxpayers will meet with Bethpage's trained volunteers in-person, who will then prepare and e-file the tax returns. Appointments will take place at select locations in Nassau and Suffolk Counties, on Wednesdays and Fridays. Locations include every Wednesday at Touro Law Center in Central Islip, from February 14th – April 10th, from 4PM-8PM; Every other Friday at the Hempstead Public Schools Parent Resource Center in Hempstead, from February 2nd – April 12th, from 10AM-4PM. To register, contact Bethpage's Community Development team at (516) 349-4288 or email them directly at community@bethpagefcu.com

The Third is the Bethpage VITA - In-Person Facilitated Self Assistance (FSA) program. Here, New York State Department of Taxation and Finance employee volunteers will help taxpayers prepare and e-file income tax returns for free at select Long Island libraries throughout Nassau and Suffolk Counties.

Appointments will take place February 27th & March 12th, 10AM-5PM at Bellmore Memorial Library; March 5th, 10AM-5PM at Central Islip Public Library; February 20th, 9AM-2PM at Lindenhurst Memorial Library; February 8th, February 22nd, March 7th, March 21st, & April 4th, 10am – 5pm, at Middle Country Library in Centereach; February 28th, March 13th & April 10th, 10AM-5PM at South Country Library in Bellport; February 13th & March 26th, 10AM-5PM at West Babylon Public Library. Appointments at library locations are open to library patrons and town residents only. To register, contact Bethpage's Community Development team at (516) 349-4288 or email them directly at community@bethpagefcu.com

The Fourth option available is the Bethpage VITA Remote FSA program where taxpayers can “Use Our Software for Free,” which will make tax filing software available for free to qualifying taxpayers after they participate in prerequisite lab sessions to learn how to use the software to e-file tax returns themselves. To participate, taxpayers must first view an information webinar, presented by Bethpage and the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance. To register, contact Bethpage's Community Development team at community@bethpagefcu.com.

“This is our 21st year of partnering with the IRS to provide free tax filing assistance to the community,” said Ever Martinez, Community Engagement Relationship Manager, Bethpage. “Tax returns and tax credits provide individuals and families with money back that can make a large impact on their quality of life. We encourage those who are eligible to register. You don't have to be a Bethpage member to receive the free services.”

Bethpage VITA volunteers will also educate eligible working families about the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) while preparing tax returns. The EITC is an anti-poverty program available to four out of five eligible Long Island households and could put up to an extra \$7,830 into the hands of deserving Long Island families. Credit amounts are based on income levels, filing status and other factors. In 2023, Bethpage completed 787 VITA tax returns, and helped secure IRS total refunds of over \$793,734. Bethpage also helped secure \$163,939 in Earned Income Tax Credits.

Since the program's inception in 2004, over 25,027 individuals have filed their tax returns through Bethpage, resulting in \$29,527,829 million returned to the Long Island community.

Qualifying taxpayers planning to take advantage of the Bethpage VITA program must bring the following materials with them for review: photo identification, social security cards for you, your spouse, and dependents, current year's tax package if you received one, wage and earnings statement(s) Form W2 from all employers, interest and dividend statements from banks (Forms 1099), a copy of last year's Federal and State returns if available, bank routing and account numbers for tax refund direct deposit, total paid for daycare, and provider's tax ID.

For more information, please visit the Bethpage VITA Program page located in the Signature Events section of the Bethpage Community page at www.lovebethpage.com/vita or contact Community Development directly at (516) 349-4288 or by email at Community@bethpagefcu.com.

About Bethpage

Bethpage Federal Credit Union is a premier community financial institution committed to enriching the lives of its members, employees and the communities it serves for the past 80 years. Bethpage is the largest credit union in the Northeast Region, and the 15th largest in the nation.

As a not-for-profit credit union, Bethpage is committed to its members and the communities it serves. In addition to giving back to its members in the form of great rates and low fees, the Bethpage Cares program invests heavily in local, high-impact community programs that serve with an eye towards creating better communities through diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging.

Voted the Glass Door Top Place to Work for Small & Midsize companies, Bethpage is a federally chartered credit union, available to people nationwide who open a \$5 dollar membership account. Bethpage offers a robust digital platform that allows members to bank from anywhere. Bethpage is a part of the national CO-OP network that gives members access to their accounts at over 30,000 free ATMs and 5,000+ shared branches across the U.S. As a financial cooperative, Bethpage offers the best-in market rates, lowest fees and world-class service, plus a full menu of personal and commercial financial services. For more information on Bethpage's robust portfolio of banking, borrowing, and investment services, visit www.lovebethpage.com or call 1-800- 628-7070.

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