EMPLOYERS: 9 Ways to Earn Income Tax Credits for Your Company

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC): An Employer-Friendly Benefit for Hiring Job Seekers Most in Need of Employment

In This Fact Sheet:

- How to Earn a Tax Credit For New Hires
- How To Apply For The Tax Savings
- Where To Get More Information

Background and Updates:

Use of the WOTC has substantially increased in recent years as Congress has expanded several target groups’ requirements, increased the tax credit for certain groups and introduced new flexible filing provisions. For example, during Fiscal Year 2007, over 655,000 certifications were issued by the state workforce agencies, and this figure is growing every year.

On May 25, 2007, the President signed into law the Small Business and Work Opportunity Tax Act of 2007 (P.L. 110-28), which extends the WOTC Program through August 31, 2011. This Act and the Tax Relief and Health Care Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-432), signed into law on December 20, 2006, amend certain target group definitions, introduce new provisions that streamline the WOTC program and make it easier for the business sector to participate. For example, P. L. 109-432 eliminated the Welfare-to-Work Tax Credit (WtWTC) by merging it into the WOTC and making the Long-term TANF Recipient another WOTC target group. This Fact Sheet discusses the consolidated WOTC as extended and modified by both Acts. The Work Opportunity Tax Credit can now be as much as:

- $2,400 generally for each new adult hire,
- $1,200 for each summer youth hire,
- $4,800 for each new disabled veteran hire, and
- $9,000 for each new long-term TANF recipient hired over a 2-yr. period.

By Participating in the WOTC Program Employers:

- Make the hiring decision,
- Complete minimal paperwork to claim the tax credit, and
- Can hire as many new individuals who qualify for these tax savings.
Hire From Among These 9 Groups of Job Seekers to Qualify for the WOTC

1. **Long-term TANF recipient**-- member of a family that received Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) for at least 18 consecutive months ending on the hiring date, or a member of a family that received TANF for any 18 months beginning after August 5, 1997, and the earliest 18-month period, beginning after August 5, 1997, ended during the past 2 years ending on the hiring date, or whose family stopped being eligible for TANF because Federal or state law limited the maximum time those payments could be made, and the individual is hired not more than 2 years after such eligibility ended.

2. **Other TANF recipient**-- member of a family that received TANF payments for any 9 months during the 18-month period ending on the hiring date.

3. **Veteran**-- member of a family that received food stamps for at least a 3-month period during the 15-month period ending on the hiring date, or a disabled veteran entitled to compensation for a service-connected disability hired within one year of discharge or release from active duty or unemployed for a period or periods totaling at least 6 months of the year ending on the hiring date.

4. **18-39 year-old food stamp recipient**-- member of a family that received food stamps for either the 6-month period ending on the hiring date, or for at least 3 of the 5 months ending on the hiring date in the case of a family member who ceased to be eligible for such assistance under Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977.

5. **18-39 year-old designated community resident**-- individual who lives within an Empowerment Zone (EZ), Renewal Community (RC), or Rural Renewal County (RRC).

6. **16-17 year-old summer youth**-- individual who works for the employer between May 1 and September 15, and lives in an EZ or RC.

7. **Vocational rehabilitation referral**-- disabled person referred to the employer upon completion of (or while receiving) rehabilitation services approved by the State, the Ticket-to-Work Program, or the Department of Veterans Affairs.

8. **Ex-felon**-- individual who was convicted of a felony and who is hired within one year after the conviction or release from prison.

9. **SSI recipient**-- individual who received Supplemental Security Income benefits for any month ending during the past 60-day period ending on the hiring date.

Some employees do not qualify the employer for the WOTC. They include:
- Relatives and dependents
- Majority owners of the employer
- Former employees

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* The individual need not receive the assistance for the entire period if the family received it for the entire period and the individual was on the grant and thus received assistance for at least one day of the specified period.

** For the location of EZs/RCs, visit [www.hud.gov/crlocator](http://www.hud.gov/crlocator) and select “Enter Address.” For RRCs see Instructions to IRS Form 8850, June/07.
An employer must request and receive certification from its state workforce agency (SWA) that the new hire is a member of one of the nine WOTC target groups before the employer can claim the WOTC on its federal income tax return. To request certification, the employer must:

1. Complete page 1 of IRS Form 8850, Pre-Screening Notice and Certification Request for the Work Opportunity Credit, by the date of the job offer and page 2 of IRS Form 8850 after the individual is hired; and

2. Complete page 2 of IRS Form 8850 after the individual is hired;

3. Complete one of the following one-page U.S. Department of Labor forms, as appropriate:
   - ETA Form 9061, Individual Characteristics Form, if the new hire has not been given a conditional certification, ETA Form 9062, or
   - ETA Form 9062, Conditional Certification Form, if provided to the job seeker by a participating agency, such as a vocational rehabilitation agency, an employment network, or a SWA; and

4. Mail the signed/dated IRS and ETA forms to the state workforce agency’s WOTC Coordinator not later than 28 days after the new hire begins work.

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**CLARIFICATION:** The former “long-term TANF recipient” target group under the WtWTC is now a new WOTC target group. This new target group retains its former statutory definition and the more generous tax credit provisions for a tax credit of as much as $9,000 over a two-year period per new hire. With respect to this target group, the first-year WOTC is increased to 40% of qualified wages for the first year of employment and 50% of qualified wages for the second year of employment. Qualified wages are capped at $10,000 per year. To qualify employers for this tax credit, new hires must be employed at least 120 hours.

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**Certification of an Employee Takes Four Simple Steps:**

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How to Figure the WOTC

For most target groups, the WOTC is based on qualified wages paid to the employee for the first year of employment. Generally, qualified wages are capped at $6,000. The credit is 25% of qualified first-year wages for those employed at least 120 hours but fewer than 400 hours and 40% for those employed 400 hours or more.

**Summer youth employees.** Wages are capped at $3,000 for 16- and 17-year-olds working for a 90-day period between May 1 and September 15.

**Disabled veterans.** Wages are capped at $12,000.

**Long-term TANF recipients.** Wages are capped at $10,000. The WOTC is also available for the employee’s qualified second-year wages, also capped at $10,000. The credit is 50% of qualified wages for the second year of employment.

The WOTC Program

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit reduces an employer’s cost of doing business and requires little paperwork. The success and growth of this federal income tax credit for private-sector employers depends on a strong public- and private-sector partnership to help those most in need find and retain jobs and gain on-the-job skills and experience. The WOTC benefits employers and increases America’s economic growth and productivity.

We need your input to make the Work Opportunity Tax Credit Program work. Let us know how we can improve its value to you and your employees. Be a part of that success! Send your comments/suggestions to: Carmen Ortiz, U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Office of Workforce Investment, Division of Adult Services, at: ortiz.carmen@dol.gov. To learn more about other employer-related services, such as training and assistance for workers affected by layoffs, please call the Toll Free Help Line: 1-877-US-2JOBS or (1-877-872-5627), TTY: 1-877-889-5627) or visit the Web site at: www.doleta.gov/usworkforce
To learn more about the WOTC, call your State WOTC Coordinator, visit the WOTC website, http://www.doleta.gov/business/Incentives/opptax or call your local employment or state workforce agency. The telephone numbers of the State WOTC Coordinators are as follows:

Alabama - 334-353-8037  
Alaska - 907-465-5955  
Arizona - 602-495-1861 Ext. 1002  
Arkansas - 501-682-3749  
California - 916-654-5857  
California - 866-593-0173 (Toll Free)  
Colorado - 303-318-8829  
Connecticut - 860-263-6066  
Delaware - 302-761-8121  
District of Columbia - 202-698-3540  
Florida - 850-921-3299  
Georgia - 404-656-3157  
Hawaii - 808-586-8819  
Idaho - 208-332-3570, Ext.-3318  
Illinois - 312-793-6811 Ext.-231  
Indiana - 317-232-7746  
Iowa - 515-281-9010  
Kansas - 785-296-7435  
Kentucky - 502-564-7435  
Louisiana - 225-342-2923  
Maine - 207-624-6390  
Maryland - 410-767-2080  
Massachusetts - 617-626-5730  
Michigan - 313-456-3363  
Minnesota - 651-205-4505  
Mississippi - 601-321-6084  
Missouri - 573-522-9581  
Montana - 406-444-9046  
Nebraska - 402-471-2693  
Nevada - 775-684-0321  
New Hampshire - 603-228-4079  

New Jersey - 609-292-8112  
New Mexico - 505-841-8501  
New York - 518-457-6823  
North Carolina - 919-733-4896  
North Dakota - 701-328-2997  
Ohio - 614-644-0966  
Oklahoma - 405-557-5371  
Oregon - 503-947-1672  
Pennsylvania - 717-783-3676  
Puerto Rico - 787-993-9400; Ext.-2315  
Rhode Island - 401-462-8724  
South Carolina - 803-737-2592  
South Dakota - 605-626-2302  
Tennessee - 615-253-6664  
Texas - 512-463-9926  
Utah - 801-526-9480  
Vermont - 802-828-4350  
Virginia - 804-786-5277  
Virgin Islands - 340-776-3700; Ext.-2055  
Washington - 360-407-5107  
West Virginia - 304-558-3452  
Wisconsin - 608-267-4442  
Wyoming - 307-235-3611  

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