

Inglewood News

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Inglewood Rallies for Rams on the Way to Super Bowl Sunday



Fans wished the NFC Champion Los Angeles Rams well during a historic rally last Sunday at LA Stadium at Hollywood Park – the future home of the team starting in 2020. Those in attendance hear from players and coaches before the plane trip to Atlanta. Go Rams! Photo: LA Rams.

Deal Makes Filing Software Free to Millions of Taxpayers This Year

By Rob McCarthy

Tax season opened on Monday with predictions of smaller federal refunds and more questions about standard deductions under the revised tax code and which write-offs are still in play. Taxpayers expecting refunds - a practice known as the "Uncle Sam Savings Plan" - may be disappointed. However, a deal with tax software companies and the government could soften the blow.

The Internal Revenue Service estimates 100 million U.S. taxpayers can file their federal returns for free this year because of a deal the government has with the leading tax software companies. In exchange for not releasing its own free tax software, the IRS cut a deal with software developers, including TurboTax, to let taxpayers prepare and file their federal taxes at no cost.

The arrangement between the revenue-collection agency and private industry will run through the fall of 2021. The software partners include H&R Block, TurboTax, Credit Karma Tax, TaxAct and FreeTax USA. Uncertainty about the new law laws should boost interest in the free offer.

Taxpayers who claim \$66,000 or less of income after deductions for last year are eligible for the free software and filing. Individuals and couples with more than \$66,000 of adjusted income are able to prepare, but not electronically file their returns online. Instead, they must download, print and mail their federal returns. This public-private partnership began in 2002 and has some new features.

Active-duty military personnel in the South Bay with incomes of \$66,000 or less may use any Free File software product offering a

military option, the IRS said last month as it struggled to get ready for the Jan. 28 start of tax season. The government shutdown left the IRS severely shorthanded because thousands of agency and field employees were furloughed, waiting to be called back to work.

The top official at the IRS called the file-for-free choice a great partnership with the software developers. This is the first year taxpayers and their preparers will apply new tax brackets and standard deductions. Past filers may notice additional features while taxpayers who haven't tried Free File should think about it, says IRS Commissioner Chuck Rettig said. "This is a great year for people to consider using this option for preparing their taxes," he believes.

After all, why pay for something that's being given away for nothing? That's the substance of the deal between the IRS and TurboTax and other branded companies that sell their software to taxpayers from late January through April 15. The IRS estimates this freebie offer can be used by 70 percent of taxpayers. Californians have a similar free option from the Franchise Tax Board, too.

Workers, families with children, first-time filers and seniors who meet the income criteria are all eligible for Free File. The software supports all the new tax law changes, plus includes the longstanding Earned Income Tax Credit for lower-income working parents with children living at home.

How does it work? Free File is only available at IRS.gov. Start at IRS.gov/freefile, answer a few questions and see if you're one of the 70 million American taxpayers eligible for a free return. The IRS website matches an individual taxpayer or couple with a brand name software

product - at no cost to them. "Generally, taxpayers will have several options from which to choose," it says.

Taxpayers can browse the various companies and offers before selecting one. The actual federal return will be prepared on the software company's website. A smartphone app also is available for viewing the file-for-free service at the IRS. Taxpayers can use the IRS2Go app on their phones or tablets.

This latest version of Free File is available through the mid-October deadline for extension filers. Taxpayers can use the software or app to file an extension so they don't miss the April 15 deadline.

Some consumer protections have been added by the software companies at the direction of the IRS. No confusing buttons pointing taxpayers to for-fee services will appear on the Free File software anymore. The dozen software companies must direct taxpayers who don't qualify for a free tax preparation back to the IRS website to search other Free Filer offers that may accept them.

No longer can the software companies market fee-based tax preparation services to free filers who return the following year. To prevent up-selling by the online tax services, any email welcoming a free filer must link them to the free service first. No commercial offers can be included in the welcome email, per the IRS.

Despite the longest government shutdown in U.S. history, the IRS promised to issue tax refunds immediately. Refunds will start going out the first week of February and the agency "will be doing everything it can to have a smooth filing season," Rettig said. Tax-filing season opened a day earlier than last year, he noted. •

Weekend Forecast

Friday
Cloudy
61°/56°



Saturday
Rain
59°/50°



Sunday
PM
Showers
58°/51°



PETSPETS **Pets** PETSPETS

Purrrfect Companions



Bentley

Every second of every minute of every day, a helpless animal is put to death just because no one was there to take them home. Give them second chance for love when you adopt one of these precious kitties. You can

also likes to snuggle with the other cats, but also loves to get on your lap. Laynie will need another young kitten or cat to play with. she can't be adopted by herself. Besides, two is always better than one, right?



Shakespeare

a very social kitty and needs to be adopted together with one of his foster siblings or into a home with an existing kitty.

Smokey Moe loves people and other cats. Playing with other cats is his favorite thing. Wait, wait...maybe being petted by people is his favorite thing! It's difficult for Moe to decide, but he does know he would love a great home with at least one other playful kitty. Smokey Moe loves his foster dad, but he has lots of other cats and can't give Moe all the love and attention he deserves. So please adopt him and Moe promises to be the best you could ever wish for in a cat.

Shakespeare is snuggle machine and will purr you up a sonnet! He is big guy, but his bashful gaze is nothing short of heart-melting. He loves to be held, hugged and have his little face rubbed. He can be a little mischievous playing with water and needs lots of attention and entertainment. Shakespeare is talkative, friendly and gentle. He would be great partnered with a relentless kitty friend who needs mellowing or big cat family. His sensitive stomach requires a strict raw food diet.

These cats and kittens are available for adoption through Kitten Rescue, one of the largest cat rescue groups in Southern California. All our kitties are spayed/neutered, microchipped, tested for FeLV and FIV, dewormed and current on their vaccinations. For additional information and to see these or our other kittens and cats, please check our website www.kittenrescue.org or email us at mail@kittenrescue.org.

Your tax-deductible donations for the rescue and care of our cats and kittens can be made

through our website or by sending a check payable to Kitten Rescue, 914 Westwood Blvd. #583, Los Angeles, CA 90024.

On Saturdays, we have adoptions from noon to 3:30 p.m. in Westchester at 8655 Lincoln



Simba

also check out their friends on our website – www.kittenrescue.org

Laynie is one of the best kittens her foster mom has ever had. This four-month-old cutie loves the kitty toy box and tries to empty it daily. Then Laynie waits for her foster mom to pick her up and give her Eskimo kisses. That's Laynie's thing; she loves doing it. She

Who says all teenagers are moody, constantly text, and roll their eyes at their parents' comments? Not this adorable teenager: meet **Simba**. He is always upbeat, never texts and promises to never do the eye roll! Simba is a sweet and funny kitty whom we call the Energizer Bunny because he just keeps going...and going...and going. He would be happiest if he can have a feline buddy who has the same energy level as he does. Simba is such a lovable guy and we promise you will never have to say to him, "Please stop texting."

Isabel is a sweet and playful kitty. She can be shy at first and a little bit skittish, but that's just because she wants to be sure she can trust you. Once she's comfortable, she opens up and shows her more energetic side. Isabel loves belly rubs, running around and playing with toys. This young girl would do best in a quiet home where she can receive lots of love and attention and build a close, special relationship with her forever family.

Bentley is a friendly, fluffy kitty who likes to spend his days napping, playing with his cat toys and wrestling with his foster siblings. He has a gentle personality and is such a joy to have around. Cuddle sessions on the couch? Bentley is your guy! Binge watching your favorite show in bed? Bentley will keep you company. Bentley will show off his hunting skills when you bring out the laser pointer or the feather wand. He is



Isabel

Blvd. just south of Manchester Avenue, and also in Mar Vista at 3860 Centinela Ave, just south of Venice Boulevard. Our website lists additional adoption sites and directions to each location.

Saving one animal won't change the world, but the world will surely change for that animal. •



Smokey Moe



Laynie