

# Do I Need to File a Return?

Tax Information for Dependents, Self-Employed Workers, and Household Employees

## #1: Dependents

### Tax Filing Requirements

If you are a dependent, under the age of 65, and single, you must file a return if:

- Your **earned income** was more than \$14,600 or
- Your **unearned income** was more than \$1,300 or
- Your **gross income** (total of your earned and unearned income) was more than the **larger** of:
  - \$1,300 or
  - Your earned income plus \$450

**NOTE:** The first \$1,300 of unearned income is tax-free.

**NOTE:** If you do not expect to owe income taxes for the current year AND you did not owe any income taxes for the previous year, you can mark yourself as *exempt* on your W-4 form. This makes sure that no income taxes are withheld from your paycheck. Social Security and Medicare payroll taxes (often noted as FICA on pay stubs) will still be withheld.

### Can I file an income tax return if my parents claim me as a dependent?

Yes, even if your parents claim you as a dependent on their tax return, you can still file your own return.

If you don't meet the income requirements to file a return, you may still qualify for a **tax refund** even if your parents claim you as their dependent.

- For most taxpayers, the deadline to file a return is **April 15, 2025** but if you're due a refund or do not owe any tax, you won't be charged a penalty by the IRS. However, you'll still want to file as soon as possible because the IRS only allows you three years to claim any refund you're due.

### Standard Deduction for Dependents

If you can be claimed as a dependent by another taxpayer, your standard deduction for 2024 is limited to the greater of:

- \$1,300, or
- Your earned income plus \$450 (but the total can't be more than the basic standard deduction for your filing status).

## #2: Self-Employed Workers

### Who is self-employed?

- You carry on a trade or business as a sole proprietor or an independent contractor.
- You are a member of a partnership that carries on a trade or business.
- You are otherwise in business for yourself (including a part-time business or gig worker)
- The IRS views a self-employed contractor as having work defined by the worker.
- Some examples of self-employed individuals are plumbers, carpenters, and repair workers.

### Tax Filing Requirements

- You must file a return if your net earnings (your income minus your expenses) from self-employment were \$400 or more.
- Generally you are required to file an annual return and may need to pay estimated tax quarterly.

Self-employed individuals generally must pay **self-employment tax** (SECA), which is the 15.3% tax on earnings that is the equivalent to Social Security and Medicare payroll taxes withheld from employees' checks (FICA).

## #3: Household Employees

### Who is a household employee?

- A household employee is an individual who is paid to provide a service within their employer's residence. Employers choose what kinds of work a household employee is responsible for and how it will be done.
- The IRS views a household employee as having work defined by the employer.
- Some examples of household employees include babysitters, nannies, and gardeners.

### Tax Filing Requirements

- You must file a return if your earned income was more than the standard deduction (ie. \$14,600 for 2024).

Social Security and Medicare payroll taxes do not need to be withheld if the employee meets any of the following criteria:

- The employee is the employer's child and is under the age of 21
- The employee is under the age of 18 at any time during the tax year

Information in this reference was copied and modified from the following articles for a smoother learning process in the classroom. We've also updated a few of the figures to reflect the current tax filing year.

- [NGPF Reference: Updated Tax Figures](#)
- [Tax Topic No. 753 Form W-4 – Employee's Withholding Certificate](#)
- [Can I File an Income Tax Form if My Parents Claim Me?](#)
- [Rules for Claiming a Dependent on Your Tax Return](#)
- [Topic No. 551 Standard Deduction](#)
- [IRS Self-Employed Individuals Tax Center](#)
- [Household Employee](#)
- [IRS Topic No. 756 Employment Taxes for Household Employees](#)
- [Does Everyone Need to File an Income Tax Return?](#)

#### Additional Information

- [Tax Tips for Nannies and At Home Care Givers - TurboTax Tax Tips & Videos](#)
- [Nanny Tax Definition](#)