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10 TIPS FOR LATE FILERS

By Victor Sy, CPA

1. **File Electronically** - Consider filing electronically instead of using paper tax forms. If you file electronically and choose direct deposit, you will receive your refund faster.
2. **Check social security numbers** - Make sure that SS numbers are correct for you, your spouse, and children. If you e-file, names used for your returns must match exact names that appear in your SS cards. Errors can delay or reduce your earned income credits and your tax refunds.
2. **Double-Check Your Figures** - If you are filing the old style paper return, you should double-check that you have correctly figured the refund or balance due.
3. **Check the Tax Tables** - If you are filing a paper return, you should double-check that you have used the right figure from the tax table.
4. **Sign your form** - Taxpayers must sign and date paper-filed returns. Both spouses must sign a joint return, even if only one had income. Anyone paid to prepare a return must also sign it.
5. **Use the coded envelope** included with your tax package to mail your return. If you did not receive an envelope, check the section called "Where Do You File?" in the tax instruction booklet.
6. **Make your check payable to "United States Treasury."** Enclose Payment Voucher Form 1040-V,
7. **Write year and form (2011 1040)** in the memo section of your check.
8. **Write your SS number** at the top of your check, preferable with a red pen.
9. **File an extension** through 10/15, the last and only extension (the 8/15 extension is gone) if you cannot file by the 4/15 deadline.
10. **Don't miss next year's estimated tax payments** - If you file in October, you would have missed estimated tax vouchers for 4/15, 6/15, and 9/15. This means penalties for late payment. In other words, start paying estimates for the current year in April, June, or September, **even if you have not filed your return.**