



What You Should Know Before Filing

(NAPSA)—Making your money work harder for you may be easier with some advice from the tax professionals at Jackson Hewitt Tax Service:

1. Take a very good look at your W-2 form. Mistakes can delay your tax return or even reduce your Social Security benefits when you retire. Make sure the name on your form matches the name on your Social Security card.

You should get a W-2 from every employer you have worked for. If you worked multiple jobs, you may have paid more than you should in Social Security taxes and may be able to get some of that money back.

2. For Tax Season 2003, federal and military employers can provide employees with electronic access to their Forms W-2. This can let many get a head start on tax return preparation and filing as well as avoid the possibility of the form getting lost. Most of the more than 4,100 Jackson Hewitt Tax Service locations opened January 2 to assist customers through their tax preparation process.

3. The definition of earned income has changed and, as a result, more people may qualify for more money. This may be of particular advantage to military personnel, since military housing and combat pay are no longer counted.

Earned income will consist of only what is reported as wages by an employer or the net profit from the firm of a self-employed individual.

It's also easier to qualify a child for an earned income credit. Chil-



Taxpayers may be in for some good news this year if they take advantage of changes in the tax laws.

Children now include a son, daughter, stepson, stepdaughter or a lineal descendent of any such relative. The same can now also apply to the taxpayer's brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister or a lineal descendent of such relative. It can even apply to eligible foster or adopted children, even if the adoption is not final.

Also considered good news is that the maximum earned income credit has increased to \$2,506 for one qualifying child, \$4,140 for two qualifying children and a \$376 credit for taxpayers with no children.

Income thresholds for eligibility have increased so more people may qualify this year.

For more information and other tax advice, call Jackson Hewitt Tax Service at 1-800-234-1040 or visit www.jacksonhewitt.com.