

Taxes Are, Well, Taxing

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By *Ashley Goforth*

Filing taxes is no easy task. The idea of owing money or not getting what I expect back on my return keeps me up nights during tax season. Luckily, the Food Bank's [Tax Assistance Program](#) can ease the mind of low- to moderate-income New Yorkers. In early March, I had the opportunity to travel to our Food & Finance Center in Harlem, the main site for the Food Bank's Tax Assistance Program.

The atmosphere is similar to any financial institution: long lines, but comforting and confident assistance. Once your turn arrives and you ease into a questionnaire with your preparer — Single? Filing jointly? — a weight suddenly lifts off your shoulders. "My taxes are getting done!" you may think to yourself. When the preparer hands you the envelope to mail in your forms, a wave of relief comes over you.



Perhaps you feel savvy enough to tackle filing on your own, but as I said already, it's no easy task and there may be many credits you are entitled to that our trained preparers can help you understand. At our Harlem site, twelve computers are ready for you to log on and file your taxes, with a certified volunteer preparer acting as your coach — ready with guidance at any step of the way. It's a quiet moment, but when New Yorkers click that "Submit 2008 Taxes" button, knowing that they will receive unexpected funds that can help pay their bills or stretch their food budgets, is to see [financial empowerment](#) come alive.

Learn more and see if [you may be eligible](#) for the Food Bank's Tax Assistance Program.