

What's New and Other Important Information for 2014

Differences between California and Federal Law

In general, for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2010, California law conforms to the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) as of January 1, 2009. However, there are continuing differences between California and federal law. When California conforms to federal tax law changes, we do not always adopt all of the changes made at the federal level. For more information, go to ftb.ca.gov and search for **conformity**. Additional information can be found in FTB Pub. 1001, Supplemental Guidelines to California Adjustments, the instructions for California Schedule CA (540NR), and the Business Entity tax booklets.

The instructions provided with California tax forms are a summary of California tax law and are only intended to aid taxpayers in preparing their state income tax returns. We include information that is most useful to the greatest number of taxpayers in the limited space available. It is not possible to include all requirements of the California Revenue and Taxation Code (R&TC) in the tax booklets. Taxpayers should not consider the tax booklets as authoritative law.

Conformity – For updates regarding federal acts, go to ftb.ca.gov and search for **conformity**.

2014 Tax Law Changes/What's New

Voluntary Contributions – You may contribute to the following new funds:

- California Senior Legislature Fund
- Habitat For Humanity Fund
- California Sexual Violence Victim Services Fund

Financial Incentive for Turf Removal – For taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2014, and before January 1, 2019, taxpayers can exclude from gross income any amount received as a rebate, voucher, or other financial incentive issued by a local water agency or supplier for participation in a turf removal water conservation program. Additional information can be found in the instructions for California Schedule CA (540NR).

Penalty Assessed by Professional Sports League – For taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2014, an owner of all or part of a professional sports franchise will not be allowed a deduction for the amount of any fine or penalty paid or incurred, that was assessed or imposed by the professional sports league that includes that franchise. Additional information can be found in the instructions for California Schedule CA (540NR).

Philippines Disaster – California does not conform to the federal Philippines Charitable Giving Assistance Act, enacted March 25, 2014. For federal, taxpayers can choose to treat cash contributions for the relief of victims in areas affected by Typhoon Haiyan made on or after March 26, 2014, and before midnight on Monday, April 14, 2014, as if made on December 31, 2013. Eligible contributions can be claimed on either a 2013 or 2014 tax return, but not both. Contributions made after April 14, 2014, but on or before December 31, 2014, can only be claimed on a 2014 tax return. For California purposes, contributions may only be claimed on your 2014 tax return. If for federal purposes, you claimed the contribution on your 2013 tax return, you will make an adjustment to your 2014 California tax return to add the amount of the contribution to your charitable deductions. If you erroneously deducted the contribution on your 2013 California tax return, you will need to amend your 2013 tax return to reduce the contribution.

New Employment Credit – For taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2014, and before January 1, 2021, the New Employment Credit (NEC) is available to a qualified taxpayer that hires a qualified full-time employee on or after January 1, 2014, and pays or incurs qualified wages attributable to work performed by the qualified full-time employee in a designated census tract or economic development area, and receives a **tentative credit reservation** for that qualified full-time employee. In addition, an **annual certification of employment** is required with respect to each qualified full-time employee hired in a previous taxable year. In order to be allowed a credit, the qualified taxpayer must have a net increase in the total number of full-time employees in California. Any credits not used in the taxable year may be carried forward up to five years. If a qualified employee is terminated within the first 36 months after beginning employment, the employer may be required to recapture previously taken credits. For more information, go to ftb.ca.gov and search for **nec** or get form FTB 3554, New Employment Credit.

Repeal of Geographically Targeted Economic Development Area Tax Incentives – The California legislature repealed and made changes to all of the Geographically Targeted Economic Development Area (G-TEDA) Tax Incentives. Enterprise Zones (EZ) and Local Agency Military Base Recovery Areas (LAMBRA) were repealed on January 1, 2014. The Targeted Tax Areas (TTA) and Manufacturing Enhancement Areas (MEA) both expired on December 31, 2012. For more information, go to ftb.ca.gov and search for **repeal tax incentives**.

California Competes Credit – For taxable years beginning on and after January 1, 2014, and before January 1, 2025, the California Competes Credit is available to businesses that want to come to California or stay and grow in California. Tax credit agreements will be negotiated by the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) and approved by the California Competes Tax Credit Committee. The California Competes Credit only applies to state income or franchise tax. Taxpayers who are awarded a contract by the committee will claim the credit on their income or franchise tax returns using credit code 233. The credit can reduce tax below the tentative minimum tax. Any credits not used in the taxable year may be carried forward up to six years. For more information, go to the GO-Biz website at business.ca.gov or ftb.ca.gov and search for **ca competes**.

Like-Kind Exchanges – For taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2014, California requires taxpayers who exchange property located in California for like-kind property located outside of California, and meet all of the requirements of the Internal Revenue Code Section 1031, to file an annual information return with the Franchise Tax Board (FTB). For more information, get form FTB 3840, California Like-Kind Exchanges, or go to ftb.ca.gov and search for **like kind**.

College Access Credit – For taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2014, and before January 1, 2017, a credit is available to taxpayers who contribute to the College Access Tax Credit Fund. Taxpayers who receive a certificate from the California Educational Facilities Authority (CEFA) may claim the credit on their income or franchise tax returns using credit code 235. The CEFA will provide a copy of each credit certificate issued, to the Franchise Tax Board (FTB). Any credits not used in the taxable year may be carried forward to future years for up to six years. For more information, go to treasurer.ca.gov/cefa.

Direct Deposit for ScholarShare 529 College Savings Plans – If you have a ScholarShare 529 College Savings Plan account maintained by the ScholarShare Investment Board, you may have your refund directly deposited to your ScholarShare account.

Minimum Wage – On and after July 1, 2014, the minimum wage for all industries shall not be less than nine dollars (\$9) per hour.

Other Important Information

Cancellation of Debt Income (CODI) – For taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2014, and before January 1, 2019, California did not conform to the federal recognition of CODI under IRC Section 108(i). If you recognized the CODI for federal tax purposes, then you must deduct the federal CODI amount. See Specific Line Instructions for more information.

Net Operating Loss (NOL) Carryback – NOLs incurred in taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2013, shall be carried back to each of the preceding two taxable years.

The allowable NOL carryback percentage varies. For an NOL incurred in a taxable year beginning on or after:

- January 1, 2013, and before January 1, 2014, the carryback amount shall not exceed 50% of the NOL.
- January 1, 2014, and before January 1, 2015, the carryback amount shall not exceed 75% of the NOL.
- January 1, 2015, the carryback amount shall be 100% of the NOL.

To make the election, check the box in Part I under Section C – Election to Waive Carryback, of form FTB 3805V, and attach form FTB 3805V to the tax return. For more information, get form FTB 3805V.

Individuals, Estates, and Trusts compute the NOL carryback in Part IV of form FTB 3805V, Net Operating Loss (NOL) Computation and NOL and Disaster Loss Limitations — Individuals, Estates, and Trusts. For more information, get form FTB 3805V.

Election to Waive Carryback – Any taxpayer entitled to a carryback period pursuant to Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 172(b)(3) may elect to relinquish/waive the entire carryback period with respect to an NOL incurred in the 2013 taxable year. By making the election, the taxpayer is electing to carry an NOL forward instead of carrying it back in the previous two years.

Mandatory Electronic Payments – You are required to remit all your payments electronically once you make an estimate or extension payment exceeding \$20,000 or you file an original tax return with a total tax liability over \$80,000. Once you meet this threshold, all subsequent payments regardless of amount, tax type, or taxable year must be remitted electronically. The first payment that would trigger the mandatory e-pay requirement does not have to be made electronically. Individuals who do not send the payment electronically may be subject to a 1% noncompliance penalty.

You can request a waiver from mandatory e-pay if one or more of the following is true:

- You have not made an estimated tax or extension payment in excess of \$20,000 during the current or previous taxable year.
- Your total tax liability reported for the previous taxable year did not exceed \$80,000.
- The amount you paid is not representative of your total tax liability.

For more information or to obtain the waiver form, go to ftb.ca.gov and search for **mandatory e-pay**. Electronic payments can be made using Web Pay on FTB's website, electronic funds withdrawal (EFW) as part of the e-file tax return, or your credit card.

Estimated Tax Payments – Taxpayers are required to pay 30% of the required annual payment for the 1st required installment, 40% of the required annual payment for the 2nd required installment, no installment is due for the 3rd required installment, and 30% of the required annual payment for the 4th required installment.

Taxpayers with a tax liability less than \$500 (\$250 for married/RDP filing separately) do not need to make estimated tax payments.

Backup Withholding – With certain limited exceptions, payers that are required to withhold and remit backup withholding to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) are also required to withhold and remit to the FTB on income sourced to California. If the payee has backup withholding, the payee must contact the FTB to provide a valid taxpayer identification number, before filing the tax return. Failure to provide a valid taxpayer identification number may result in a denial of the backup withholding credit. For more information, go to ftb.ca.gov and search for **backup withholding**.

Registered Domestic Partners (RDP) – Under California law, RDPs must file their California income tax return using either the married/RDP filing jointly or married/RDP filing separately filing status. RDPs have the same legal benefits, protections, and responsibilities as married couples unless otherwise specified.

If you entered into a same sex legal union in another state, other than a marriage, and that union has been determined to be substantially equivalent to a California registered domestic partnership, you are required to file a California income tax return using either the married/RDP filing jointly or married/RDP filing separately filing status.

For purposes of California income tax, references to a spouse, husband, or wife also refer to a California RDP, unless otherwise specified. When we use the initials RDP they refer to both a California registered domestic "partner" and a California registered domestic "partnership," as applicable. For more information on RDPs, get FTB Pub. 737, Tax Information for Registered Domestic Partners.

Direct Deposit Refund – You can request a direct deposit refund on your tax return whether you e-file or file a paper tax return. Please be sure to fill in the routing and account numbers carefully and double-check the numbers for accuracy to avoid it being rejected by your bank.

Group Nonresident Returns (also known as Composite Returns) – For taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2009:

- Group nonresident returns may include less than two nonresident individuals.
- Nonresident individuals with more than \$1,000,000 of California taxable income are eligible to be included in group nonresident returns. An additional 1% tax will be assessed on their entire California taxable income if they elect to be part of the group return.

See FTB Pub. 1067, Guidelines for Filing a Group Form 540NR, for more information.

California Disclosure Obligations – If the individual was involved in a reportable transaction, including a listed transaction, the individual may have a disclosure requirement. Attach federal Form 8886, Reportable Transaction Disclosure Statement, to the back of the California tax return along with any other supporting schedules. If this is the first time the reportable transaction is disclosed on the tax return, send a duplicate copy of the federal Form 8886 to the address below. The FTB may impose penalties if the individual fails to file federal Form 8886 or fails to provide any other required information. A material advisor is required to provide a reportable transaction number to all taxpayers and material advisors for whom the material advisor acts as a material advisor.

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For more information, go to ftb.ca.gov and search for **tax shelters**.