Job Aide for the Tax-Aide Interview Process

Step	Goal	Suggested actions and approach
1	Cultivate a comfortable environment and put the taxpayer at ease. Be friendly, respectful, speak clearly & simply. Use active listening skills: 1. Nod, smile, and make eye contact. 2. Use open-ended questions. 3. Listen, restate, paraphrase, encourage additional dialogue.	Introduce yourself: "Please call me Tom." "(Name), what would you like me to call you?" Engage in small talk briefly: e.g., discuss weather, inquire as to difficulty finding site, and apologize if long wait. "I would like to help you prepare your tax return." Explain the tax return preparation process: 1. How the information they provide will assist in determining if they must file a return, their eligibility for tax credits etc. 2. The quality review process that means a second tax counselor will also work with their return. 3. Allow taxpayers to share their expectations, needs or concerns by asking if they have any questions before beginning. 4. Advise taxpayers that they are solely responsible for the information on their return. Establish permission to ask them questions: 1. "In order that I can help you prepare your return, may I ask you questions?" 2. Encourage them to ask questions throughout the process. 3. Remind the taxpayer that they are responsible for the information on their return.
2	Verify ID	Examine photo ID and Social Security card for each taxpayer and Social Security ID for each dependent.
3	Review form 13614-C intake questions. Pick up form and check off items on pages 1, 2 & 3 as you review them. Use interview tips in Pub 4012. Use 13614-C Job Aid for Volunteers	Verify that all questions on the intake form have been addressed and answered correctly. 1. Confirm Marital Status. 2. Identify qualifying dependents and exemptions. (Pay careful attention to the questions in the grayed area on page 1.) 3. Use questions, such as, "Who else lives in your home," or "Who do you support who lives outside your home?" 4. For each person in Part II, Question 2, ask and record answers from questions in grayed area. 5. Seek information documents to verify each response, W-2s, 1099s, 1098s etc. (Page 2, Part III.) 6. Identify deductions to prepare every return to take itemized deductions. (Page 2, Part IV) 7. Complete shaded boxes Page 3, Part VI regarding health insurance coverage. If questions are unanswered or marked Unsure, provide clarification of the question and update response to yes or no. Ask probing questions to clarify.
4	Use Pub 4012 Tabs B and C	Determine Filing Status and Dependency Exemptions.

5	Start the return using TaxWise Pick up form and enter TP Identifying Information from page 1.	Engage the taxpayer at each step: e.g., " I am entering your address" After completing entry of Main Information Sheet, print the form for the Taxpayer to verify the information including spelling before proceeding to the 1040 1. Name 2. Address 3. Social Security Number
6	Prepare the return using TaxWise Pick up form Complete as if itemizing every return	• Gather documentation for each step. • Verify name, address and social security number consistency for each document compared to information on Main Information Form. • Write any unusual information as well as calculations on the 13614-C form in "Additional Tax Preparer notes". • Enter every possible deduction on Schedule A or related forms.
7	Pick up the form and glance down page 2. Use interview form page 3	Verify that you have information for every check mark listed by the TP(s). Complete Page 3, Part VI ny checking appropriate boxes for everyone listed on the return.
8	Quality Review Pick up form Review form 13614-C intake questions as in Step 2.	• Restate the quality review procedures. • Introduce the quality reviewer. • Explain out loud any out of ordinary items the Quality Reviewer may need to notice. • Read QR Question 15 out loud to Taxpayer. • Discuss any changes needed with the Tax Preparer and the Taxpayer.
9	Finish the return	• Print a copy of the return for the taxpayer. • Review the return with the taxpayer. • Organize return and supporting materials for the taxpayer and put in envelope. • Explain record keeping requirements. • Have taxpayer(s) sign the 8879. • Return the signed 8879 to the taxpayer • Explain the electronic filing process and time table. • Explain the retention of their data.
10	Ending session	• Thank the taxpayer for using Tax-Aide. • Ask taxpayer to return next year and to bring a copy of this year's return.

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Notes for future presentations: AARP Tax-Aide Education is all about: Client Interaction