

# IRS RETURN PREPARER TEST SPECIFICATIONS

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## Preface

It is the goal of the IRS to administer a test that is founded on basic preparer competency. As such, the Registered Tax Return Preparer (RTRP) test will focus on the ethical responsibilities of federal tax return preparers and the completion of Form 1040 series along with the basic related schedules and forms. The test specifications provided below are intended to provide guidance on the content of the RTRP test. The examples provided within each item are not all inclusive of what may be tested in a given area.

Tax preparers are required to pass this competency test in order to achieve the title of Registered Tax Return Preparer.

### **Domain 1: Preliminary Work and Collection of Taxpayer Data**

1. Review prior year's return for accuracy, comparison, and carryovers for current year return.
2. Collect taxpayer's biographical information (e.g., date of birth, age, marital status, citizenship, dependents)
3. Determine filing status
4. Determine all sources of taxable and non-taxable income (e.g., wages, interest, business, sale of property, dividends, rental income, income from flow-through entities, alimony, government payments, and pension distributions).
5. Determine applicable adjustments to gross income (e.g., self-employed health insurance, self employment tax, student loan interest deduction, alimony paid, tuition, and fees deduction).
6. Determine standard deduction and Schedule A itemized deductions (i.e., state and local tax, real estate tax, cash contributions, non-cash contributions, unreimbursed employee expense, medical expense, and mortgage interest).
7. Determine applicable credits (e.g., earned income tax credit, child tax credit, education, retirement savings, dependent and child care credit).
8. Understand tax payments (e.g., withholding, estimated payments).
9. Recognize items that will affect future returns (e.g., carryovers, depreciation).
10. Determine special filing requirements (e.g., presidentially declared disaster areas).
11. Determine filing requirements (including extensions and amended returns).
12. Understand due dates, including extensions.
13. Determine personal exemptions, including dependents.
14. Determine qualifying child/relative tests for Earned Income Credit.