

Forget Trump's tax returns. Where are everyone else's?

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So far this year, the number of people who have filed tax returns with the IRS is down significantly from about the same point last year.

By [Matt Rocheleau](#)

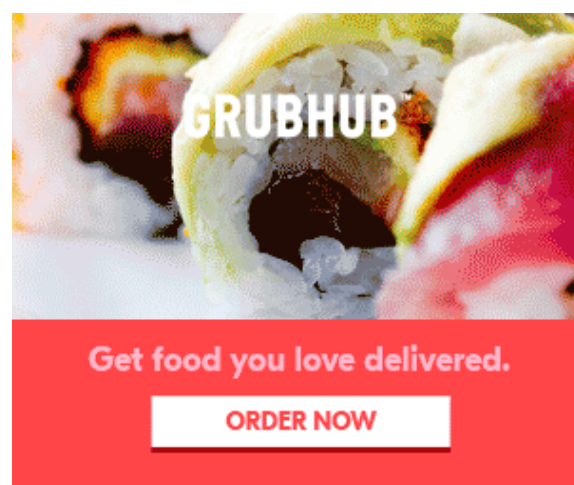
GLOBE STAFF MARCH 16, 2017

While [millions of Americans](#) are curious to take a peek at [one man's tax returns](#), IRS officials must be wondering when they'll get to see the tax returns of millions of Americans.

More than halfway into the tax filing season, the number of people who have filed returns with the Internal Revenue Service is down significantly from about the same point last year, according to the latest [statistics](#) from the federal agency.

The IRS said it had received about 69.4 million returns as of March 10. That number was down more than 5 million, or 6.8 percent, from the number as of March 11 last year.

Visits to the irs.gov website were also down by 7.3 percent to just under 215 million.



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Massachusetts is seeing the same trend. Through Tuesday, the number of tax returns filed totaled about 1.5 million, down about 5 percent from the same point last year, a state revenue department spokeswoman said.

Why have fewer Americans filed so far this year?

Part of the reason may be that this year's official "tax season" started several days later than last year's.

As of March 10, this year's season was only 34 workdays old, while the tax season last year, as of March 11, was 38

workdays old.

The IRS noted that because of that difference “year-to-year comparisons are difficult at this early point in the season.”

Other factors may also be in play.

According to [Bloomberg News](#), each tax season tends to run at its own pace for a variety of reasons. The news outlet, citing experts, listed several factors that may be affecting the rate of filing:

- A new law intended to crack down on fraud caused the IRS to warn it would not be able to issue refunds this year as quickly as it has in previous years for filers claiming certain tax credits. This may have discouraged many people who claim those credits, a group that normally files early.
- The warnings of delayed refunds may have also discouraged others who don't claim those credits.
- Undocumented immigrants may be afraid to file due to President Trump's vow to crack down on illegal immigration.
- People may be confused by ongoing discussions by politicians about changing health care and possible tax cuts (though waiting won't matter since any tax code changes would not affect what you owe this year).
- People may just be procrastinating.

The 2017 season [began](#) Jan. 23, and, unless you get an [extension](#), the deadline to submit tax returns this year is about five weeks away: Tuesday, April 18.

The usual deadline, April 15, falls on a Saturday this year, and the following Monday is Emancipation Day, which is a holiday in Washington, D.C., pushing the deadline off another day.

It's possible that's another reason for people procrastinating. But then again, the federal deadline also fell on April 18 last year.



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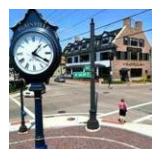
Storms could bring hail and severe winds

Damaging winds, quarter-size hail, and even a tornado are possibilities in Massachusetts today. [MORE...](#)



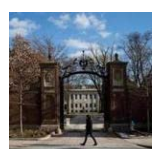
Dick Albert, former Channel 5 weatherman, dies

"It's a huge loss," said Harvey Leonard. "It's truly like losing a brother, that's what I considered him to be." [MORE...](#)



In Michelle Carter's hometown, opinions vary on justice of her sentence

Residents who spoke to the Globe were split on whether Carter, now 20, received an appropriate sentence for urging Conrad Roy III to kill himself. [MORE...](#)



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Harvard's push to broaden diversity comes as the Trump administration turns its focus on affirmative action policies. [MORE...](#)



VA Secretary ousts third official at troubled N.H. hospital

VA Secretary David Shulkin said he was responding to allegations of dangerously substandard care made by medical staff in a Boston Globe report last month. [MORE...](#)



Mother of Conrad Roy III seeks \$4.2m in wrongful death suit against Michelle Carter

Lynn Roy says she is seeking damages “caused by the defendant’s negligence and wanton and reckless conduct.” [MORE...](#)



State agrees with Trump administration to delay long-awaited water pollution rules

A landmark plan to curb pollution in lakes, rivers, and streams throughout Massachusetts has been delayed for at least another year. [MORE...](#)



Teamster in Top Chef trial could get jail time for posting on Facebook during trial

Daniel Redmond, one of four Teamsters on trial, posted an article on the Facebook page, “Support the Teamster 4,” violating a court order to not speak publicly about the case. [MORE...](#)



Thousands of cyclists are pedaling during the 38th Pan-Mass Challenge

More than 5,300 cyclists took off Saturday morning in the 2017 Pan-Mass Challenge, raising money for patient care and cancer research. [MORE...](#)



He thought he was dying, but highway chief paved his own road to salvation

Tom Tinlin needed a lot of things to go his way when a blood vessel in his brain burst in April. Fittingly, one of them was traffic. [MORE...](#)



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Some people redeem so many winning tickets that they raise questions about the integrity and oversight of the \$5 billion state lottery. [MORE...](#)

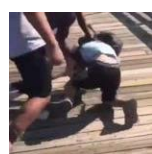
Police disperse hundreds of youths in the North End

State Police spokesman David Procopio said Boston police requested Massachusetts State Police assistance with dispersing between 500 and 1,000 youths. [MORE...](#)



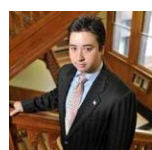
A cross-country bicycle trip of a lifetime — delayed 40 years

John Sweeney averaged 65 miles a day, mostly along Route 20, a 3,365-mile ribbon of asphalt that is the longest road in the United States. [MORE...](#)



State Police investigate video of youths fighting on pier in Quincy

A video of youths being punched and kicked is making the rounds on social media. [MORE...](#)



Cambridge city councilor to leave politics

Cambridge city councilor Leland Cheung, the first Asian-American on the council, announced this week that he intends to leave politics. [MORE...](#)



This weekend, bus shuttles replace rail service on five lines

You might want to just stay home this weekend. [MORE...](#)



Michelle Carter receives 15 months in jail; will remain free pending appeal

A judge sentenced Michelle Carter to two and a half years, with 15 months to serve and 15 months probation, for goading her boyfriend to kill himself in a high-profile texting suicide case. However, he allowed Carter to remain free while awaiting appeal. [MORE...](#)



'Dukes of Hazzard' actor arrested in Waltham

Tom Wopat was arraigned on a charge of groping a woman who was to share the stage with him in a local production of "42nd Street." [MORE...](#)

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