

Filing Your Tax Return

Your earnings are subject to both federal and state income taxes. The amount the Payroll office withholds from your paycheck is based on your W-4 and RI W-4 forms. If you need to adjust your W-4, you can do so in Workday. Please note that if you do not submit a W-4 reflecting your circumstances, Payroll will default to withholding the maximum amount at your income bracket: single with zero dependents.

By the end of January 2026, you will receive a W-2, a statement of earnings needed to file your federal and state tax returns. For current student employees, your W-2 will be available in Workday under Pay > Tax Documents. Former employees will receive their W-2 via mail. To update your mailing address, contact [Payroll](#).

Available electronically in Workday (Pay > Tax Documents). To ensure you are looking at the correct profile, type your name in the search bar without pressing enter, and click on your name with "Student Employment Profile" or your job title.

For help completing your tax forms, you can use a tax service provider (such as H&R Block), or hire a tax professional. If you choose to prepare your taxes yourself, the required forms are available via the following links:

- Federal Tax Forms
- Rhode Island State Tax Forms
- Tax Forms for Other States

Tax Filing for Domestic Students

If you earned income in 2025, are legally obligated to file a federal return if your total earnings meet the IRS filing requirement for their status. Your W-2 form, which reports your wages and withheld taxes, will be available in Workday by January 31, 2026.

Deadline: File by April 15, 2026.

Getting a Refund: If too much tax was withheld from your paychecks, you'll get a refund after you file.

Need forms or more info? Start at the official [IRS website](#).

Tax Information for International Students

All F-1 and J-1 students must complete and submit at least one tax form. International students can receive a discount code from ISSA for [Sprintax](#), a tax-filing platform.

If you are an F-1 or J-1 student who was physically present in the U.S. during 2025, you must file a tax form with the IRS, even if you did not work. All F-1 and J-1 students must file [Form](#)

[8843](#), regardless of income. If you worked in the U.S., you may also need to file Form [1040-NR](#) and include income reported on your Form W-2 (for employment income) or [Form 1042-S](#) (for income covered by a tax treaty, such as scholarships/fellowships).

Tax Treaties: Some international students may be eligible for tax treaty benefits that can reduce or eliminate U.S. tax on certain income. If you are eligible for a tax treaty benefit, it's important that you complete a tax treaty analysis with the Student Employment office at the start of your employment.

If you did not apply your tax treaty benefit at the time of employment but were eligible, you can still recover some of the federal taxes paid by filing the correct forms. If you haven't filed yet, you can request an adjustment when you file your taxes.

Important Reminder: If you haven't visited the Student Employment office with your SSN card, a tax treaty analysis has not been completed. We encourage you to come in for this review.

Sprintax Tax Preparation

ISSA provides free federal filing via [Sprintax](#), a tax preparation software for nonresident alien international students. Sprintax will guide you through the tax filing process, help you gather necessary documents, and determine if you are due for a refund.

Access Code & Availability: ISSA will provide your Sprintax access code and instructions in early February 2026. The software will be available from February 1 through the tax filing deadline. Note: You are responsible for any state filing fees charged by Sprintax.

Tax Forms and Deadlines

- Form W-2 (for employment income): Available by January 31, 2026, in Workday for current student employees.
- Form 1042-S (for income covered by a tax treaty): Must be sent by March 15, 2026 (if applicable).

If you worked off-campus in 2025, contact your employer for instructions on how to access your tax forms.

Important Deadline: The federal tax filing deadline is **April 15, 2026**. Be sure to file your return by this date to avoid penalties. If April 15 is a weekend or holiday, the deadline is the next business day.

Renewing Tax Treaty Benefits for 2026

If you were eligible for tax treaty benefits in 2025, you will need to renew them for 2026. Please visit the Student Employment office with your SSN card to complete the necessary tax treaty analysis at the start of your 2026 employment.

Resources for Tax Filing

- IRS: IRS Information for Foreign Students and Scholars
- VITA: Free tax preparation for low-to-moderate income individuals. Note: VITA sites may not be able to assist nonresident aliens. Please check with the site beforehand. Learn more at VITA Sites in Rhode Island.
- MyFreeTaxes: File taxes for free through MyFreeTaxes. (Primarily for U.S. residents/citizens.)
- Sprintax: Free federal filing for nonresident students. Details provided by ISSA in February 2026.

FAQ

Note: "Domestic Students" refers to U.S. citizens, permanent residents, and resident aliens for tax purposes.

1. Do I need to file a tax return if I only worked part-time?

- Domestic Students: Yes, if you earned income during the year, you are required to file a tax return if your income exceeds the IRS filing threshold. All income must be reported to the IRS.
- International Students: Yes, if you worked in the U.S., you are required to file a tax return (Form 1040-NR). All F-1 and J-1 students must file at least Form 8843, even with no income.

2. How do I know if I need to file taxes?

- Domestic Students: If your income exceeds the IRS filing requirement for your filing status, you must file. If it's below the threshold, you may choose to file for a refund.
- International Students: All F-1 and J-1 students present in the U.S. during 2025 must file a form with the IRS (Form 8843 at a minimum). If you had any income, you must file Form 1040-NR.

3. Where do I find my W-2 form?

- Domestic and International Students: Your W-2 form will be available electronically in your Workday account by January 31, 2026. Make sure you have granted consent to receive your form online. If you're a former student, you will receive your W-2 by mail. If you haven't received it by mid-February 2026, contact Payroll.

4. What is Form 1042-S and do I need it?

- International Students: [Form 1042-S](#) is issued for scholarship/fellowship income or wages covered by a tax treaty. If you received such income and are eligible for treaty benefits, you will receive this form. It reports your income and the taxes withheld under the treaty.

5. What is Form 8843 and why do I need to file it?

- International Students: F-1 and J-1 students must file [Form 8843](#) with the IRS, even if they did not work or earn income. This form documents your physical presence in the U.S. and helps establish your nonresident tax status. It must be filed by the April 15, 2026 deadline.

6. Do I need to pay taxes if I receive a W-2 or 1042-S?

- Domestic and International Students: Yes, the income reported is generally taxable. However, international students may be eligible for tax treaty benefits or the standard deduction, which could reduce or eliminate tax liability.

7. What if I forgot to apply for tax treaty benefits at the time of employment?

- International Students: If you were eligible but did not apply treaty benefits during employment, you can recover overpaid taxes by filing Form 1040-NR and the associated treaty forms (e.g., Form 8833) when you submit your tax return.

8. How do I know if I qualify for a tax refund?

- Domestic and International Students: You may be eligible for a refund if you had excess taxes withheld from your paycheck. International students may also get a refund by claiming tax treaty benefits on their return.

9. What tax forms do I need to file?

- Domestic Students: You will need Form W-2. Most students use Form 1040.
- International Students (Nonresident Aliens): You will need:
 - * Form 8843 (required for all).
 - * Form 1040-NR (if you had any income).
 - * Form W-2 (for wages).
 - * Form 1042-S (if you received treaty-based income).

10. What if I miss the tax filing deadline?

- Domestic and International Students: The deadline is April 15, 2026. If you miss it, you could face penalties and interest. You can file Form 4868 to request an automatic 6-month extension to file, but this does not extend the time to pay any taxes owed.

11. Can I file taxes for multiple jobs?

- Domestic and International Students: Yes, you must report all U.S. income from every job on your tax return. You will receive a W-2 from each employer.

12. Do I need to pay Social Security and Medicare taxes on my student earnings?

- Domestic Students: If you are enrolled at least half-time and work for the school you attend, your wages are generally exempt from Social Security and Medicare (FICA) taxes.
- International Students: As an F-1 or J-1 student employed on-campus, you are typically exempt from FICA taxes. This exemption usually does not apply to off-campus work authorized by CPT or OPT.

13. Will my on-campus job affect my tax filing?

- Domestic and International Students: Yes, the income is reportable and taxable. For international students, it is crucial for determining your tax residency status and treaty eligibility.

14. What happens if I stop being a student but still have a job at RISD?

- Domestic and International Students: If you are no longer enrolled, your eligibility for student employment ends. Notify your supervisor and the Student Employment office. For international students, leaving student status can immediately end your FICA tax exemption and change your tax treaty eligibility.

Helpful Resources:

[ISSA: Filing Taxes](#)

[IRS Information for Foreign Students and Scholars](#)

[State of Rhode Island Division of Taxation](#)

[Sprintax Guides and Support](#)