

Printing and Print Cartridges

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Summary:

This document provided guidance on acquiring and using printer cartridges for both AARP and IRS supplied printers used in the Tax-Aide Program.

AARP Foundation Provided Printers

The AARP Foundation National Office has a "Consumables" program to purchase printer cartridges and other consumables regularly used in the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide program. The cost for toner cartridges for printers that are on the consumables list will not be reimbursed if purchased from another source.

For information on ordering and reimbursement for cartridges, see the Policy Manual or consult with your TCS or SC.

IRS-Provided Printers

The IRS provides AARP Tax-Aide with a limited number of printers. All of these printers are provided on a loan basis. The recipient volunteers are expected to keep and maintain the printer(s) unless requested to return them, or until the volunteers leave the e-file program. TCSs and TCs may need, from time to time, to reallocate this equipment. Requests for any reallocated equipment should be submitted to the TCS stating the intended use and expected output.

The IRS provides replacement laser cartridges for loaned printers. For both IRS- and AARP-owned printers, the use of re-filled cartridges is not recommended. Re-manufactured cartridges from a reputable dealer are acceptable.

Printing and Cartridge Recommendations

To minimize tone and still produce a readable return for the taxpayer, printers should be set to "draft" or "economy" mode. This may require some experimentation as the method of setting this mode will vary by printer. Generally, to set the printer in economy mode, get the resolution down to 300 dpi (or lower if effective). Some printers won't give an option to set the resolution so "draft" or "Fast" might be the option. The specific option of "economy" exists on some printers, but may not result in particularly readable printouts, so test this before printing for taxpayers. When networking, the setting needs to be made on EVERY computer using the printer.

All cartridges are not created equal. "Low cost" cartridges may be "short" on toner as will some new printers with "starter" cartridges. The best buy is often a high-yield cartridge even though the up-front cost may be higher.