

## **Wireless FAQs**

November 19, 2011

**Summary:** This document answers some common questions encountered by users about using wireless (wi-fi) for TaxWise Desktop and Online (TWO):

### **Using Wireless with the TaxWise Desktop Software**

#### **Q: Can we use a wireless network for TaxWise Desktop?**

A: No, a wireless network is not permitted to run a Client/Server network for the TaxWise Desktop software. But you can use a wireless printer with the Desktop software, some restrictions apply; see the “Printer Installations for TaxWise 2011” on the Extranet for details.

#### **Q: Can we transmit returns from the TaxWise Desktop software using a wireless connection?**

A: Yes, the communication with TaxWise to send Returns and receive Acknowledgments is a secure connection and the data sent and received is encrypted.

### **Using Wireless with TaxWise Online (TWO)**

#### **Q: Do we need to use an AARP Foundation Tax-Aide supplied and pre-configured Router?**

A: No, but a separate router is recommended, it provides better security, and allows better control over your network. It also allows all TWO computers to print to a common AARP Foundation Tax-Aide printer. Any router that meets minimum specifications will be allowed and may be configured by a ‘qualified’ volunteer in the field with the approval of the TCS or SC. Minimum requirements are basically an internal firewall and capability of WPA2 encryption. Most relatively recent routers will meet these requirements.

#### **Q: Can we use an unsecured wireless network that is available at a Site?**

A: Yes, a site’s secured or open-to-the-public (unsecured) wireless Internet may be used, and accessed with or without a separate router. There are some restrictions on computer and printer configurations that must be adhered to when not using a router. See the Extranet document, “Using a Site’s Wireless Connection for TWO,” for details.

#### **Q: Can we use AARP Foundation Tax-Aide and IRS Depot laptops as wireless workstations?**

A: Yes, all computers used for TWO in a wireless network, must have an active firewall, current antivirus program installed, and file and print sharing turned off. Not all IRS Depot laptops have wireless capability. Wireless PCMCIA cards or USB adapters can be used, but AARP Foundation Tax-Aide will not reimburse for any hardware or software used with IRS computers or printers.

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### **Q: Can we use Personal, Donated or Site-provided computers as wireless workstations for TWO?**

A: Yes, personal, donated or site-provided computers can be used as wireless workstations after they pass two quick on-line scans to insure they are free of malware and the security software is up-to-date. Registration of these computers will be required to certify they have passed both scan tests.\*

### **Q: Can we use ‘air cards’ that connect to the Internet using a cellular phone signal for TWO?**

A: Yes, but AARP Foundation Tax-Aide will not reimburse the cost of these cards. If a volunteer already has one, or they are purchased with donated funds or donated by a cellular provider, they may be used for TWO. We have very limited experience with the ‘air-cards’ and can’t comment on their connection reliability.

NOTE: CCH will not provide technical support for users of air-cards.

**\*Note:** The instructions for performing these security scans and registering personal, donated and site-provided computers is on the Extranet in a document titled “Computer Security Scanning Procedures.”

When considering using wireless networks for TWO, be aware that with wireless use of secure servers, unstable connections or a hic-up in your connection will disconnect you from the server, whereas a wired connection will reestablish the connection without signing on again. If you experience connection problems with wireless workstations, you should try using wired workstations where possible.