



AMERICAN CITIZENS ABROAD
EDUCATE, ADVOCATE AND INFORM

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Americans Overseas Look to ACA's Expat Tax Services Directory for Help during COVID-19 Pandemic

Expats are looking for help claiming refundable credits (paid in cash) provided by the recently enacted Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES). Other benefits are included in the 883-page legislation, including business loans and guarantees. Additional benefits are sprinkled over other pieces of legislation. People needing assistance finding out what's available, what they should claim and what they should not, how to do this and by when, and how this fits into their tax planning going forward, can look for a qualified professional advisor on ACAs updated online [Expat Tax Services Directory](#).

Providers in 50 countries can be found there, and the number is growing. Categories are not just Expat Tax Preparation but also Expat Financial Services and Expat Legal Services. Under each category, it's possible to "drill down" and find what you want. Interested in Expat Tax Preparation? You can search under Annual Tax Projections; Bookkeeping Services; Collections Work; Corporations, Trusts And Estates Filing; e-Filing; Exempt Organizations, Charities, and Foundations; FATCA Compliance; FBAR Preparation; Federal Tax Return Preparation; IRS Audit Support; Streamlined Procedure (Voluntary Disclosure); Tax Planning and Strategy. Click around. Shop around.

With the COVID-19 pandemic and passage of a slew of emergency relief legislation, including CARES, ACA sees more and more expats looking for banking, tax, investment, and legal professional services.

"Americans overseas were already coming to ACA with questions about their 2019 tax filings, but there has been a significant uptick in questions and requests for services since the passage of the CARES Act," said Charles Bruce, ACA Legal Counsel and Chairman of ACA's sister organization, ACA Global Foundation. "More than ever, expats want to know who's out there, who does what, and how to get in touch with them. They want to be able to learn, shop around and make wise decisions."

ACA began publishing its highly acclaimed online Directory in 2014, which at first was limited to tax return preparers. Early in 2020, it was expanded to include investment advisors and managers and legal advisors. Today, it is an invaluable resource for U.S. citizens and others who need U.S. tax preparation and similar or related services.

Every year, ACA fields a very large number of inquiries about tax preparers and other service providers. As an exempt, nonpartisan, volunteer advocacy organization, it does not recommend some advisors over others, and it certainly does not want, itself, to render professional advice. Nevertheless, as a highly visible representative of Americans abroad and a source for all sorts of things for the expat community, ACA recognizes the need for an impartial, reliable source of information about these services.

"We have found over time that a surprising number of people want advice relating not just to the preparation of returns but also accounting services, investment advice and various types of legal advice. Now with the passage of the CARES Act legislation, individuals have questions and are looking for help – trying to understand how the recovery rebates will be administered, as well as other financial relief efforts provided in the legislation." said Jonathan Lachowitz, Chairman, ACA.

As discussed in ACA's January 14, 2020 [podcast discussing the updated Directory](#), adoption of residency-based taxation (RBT) legislation would alleviate, indeed, largely eliminate, the need for U.S. citizens resident overseas to declare U.S. taxes on income earned outside of the United States (foreign

income). However, investments in the U.S. and some types of U.S. source income might continue to be taxed. Additionally, many Americans living overseas still maintain property and businesses in the United States, which apart from tax issues, necessitate investment advice and legal services, such as, wills and estate planning.

“ACA continues to advocate strongly for adoption of residency-based taxation, but we are also looking to provide the community with the resources it needs right now. The Directory is one example; another is the ACA-Members/ State Department Federal Credit Union (SDFCU) account. It is a U.S.-based bank account available to ACA-Members, administered by the SDFCU. No US address or other physical presence is required. It could be an enormous benefit for those who need a U.S.-based account to receive a recovery rebate payment or to quickly and easily move funds and make payments during this challenging time,” said Marylouise Serrato, ACA Executive Director. “ACA understands it’s important that as long as Americans overseas are taxed under the current regime, they must be treated fairly and equitably.”

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