YOUR FINANCIAL MAVEN®

Individual Tax Services Guide

CPA-prepared individual tax returns for households with more than a W-2

Welcome

Some tax returns are simple enough for software. Others require a team of specialists. Many households fall in between: a side business or consulting practice, a rental property or two, a brokerage account, or income from more than one state. These returns deserve a CPA's attention and care.

I'm Samantha M. Besnoff, CPA, and I bring more than 30 years of accounting experience to every return I prepare. I accept a limited number of individual clients each year so that each one receives careful preparation, a thorough review, and a real conversation about what the numbers mean. This guide explains who the service is for, what's included, how fees work, and what to expect.

Is This Service Right for You?

This service is a strong fit if your return includes one or more of the following:

- **Self-employment income:** freelancers, consultants, independent contractors, and sole proprietors reporting on Schedule C
- **Rental real estate:** residential rental properties reported on Schedule E, including depreciation
- **Investment activity:** brokerage accounts with dividends, interest, and stock or fund sales
- **Pass-through income:** Schedule K-1s from an S corporation or partnership
- **Multi-state situations:** a move during the year, work in more than one state, or out-of-state rental property
- **Life changes with tax impact:** retirement distributions, home sales, starting a business, or a significant change in income

This service is not designed for W-2-only returns with the standard deduction, or for returns involving trusts or estates, gift tax, foreign accounts or entities, or complex multi-entity structures. If that describes your situation, I'm happy to point you toward an appropriate resource.

What's Included

Federal Return

- Form 1040 with all supporting schedules your situation requires
- Schedule A (itemized deductions) when they provide a benefit over the standard deduction
- Schedule B (interest and dividends)
- Schedule C (business income), including home office and depreciation
- Schedule D and Form 8949 (capital gains and losses)
- Schedule E (rental income and K-1 pass-through income)
- Schedule SE (self-employment tax) and the Qualified Business Income deduction
- Education, dependent care, and other credits you may qualify for
- Please note that if you need any small business clean up prior to tax preparation (not monthly Small Business CAS, that will be billed at a separate fee and will need to be done prior to the individual tax return being prepared.

State and Local Returns

- Resident State income tax return
- Part-year and nonresident state returns where required
- Local earned income tax returns where applicable

Planning and Support

- A recorded review to walk through your return before filing
- Estimated tax vouchers for the coming year, based on your actual results (where applicable)
- Electronic filing and confirmation of acceptance for federal, State, and local (where applicable)
- Secure document exchange, communications, and e-signature through my Canopy Tax client portal
- Tax questions related to your return as part of your fee answered through April 15th (see FAQs)

Fees and Payment

One flat fee covers your complete return and your questions through April 15th. There is no hourly billing during tax season or during your extension period (where applicable) through October 15th.

Fee	Amount
Flat fee for individual tax return	**$1,500**
Retainer due at signing of engagement (50%)	$750
Balance due at client review before filing	$750
If extended: 25% balance of flat fee before extension filing	$375
If extended: final balance due (25%) at client review before filing	$375
Questions, other tax work, including notice review and response, and meetings, April 16th – December 31st	**$100 per hour**
If you need small business clean up just for the individual tax returns prior to preparation.	**$500**

How payment works

- A 50% retainer is due when you sign your engagement letter. The balance is due at client review before filing.
- If your return is extended, completing it remains covered by the flat fee, but 25% of remaining fee is due before filing of the extension. The balance owed (25%) will be due at client review before filing by October 15.
- From April 16 through December 31, tax questions, meetings, planning conversations, and responses to IRS or state correspondence are billed at $100 per hour, as the work occurs.
- Organizing or reconciling business records before preparation (accounting transactional work) is quoted separately.

How It Works

1. **Discovery call.** A brief conversation to understand your situation and confirm we're a good fit. There is a $75 fee for this discovery call.
2. **Engagement.** You'll receive your engagement letter and required consent forms to sign electronically, along with your retainer invoice. This will all be managed through my secure Canopy Tax client portal.
3. **Document collection.** Upload your documents and complete the tax organizer through the secure client portal. Once all document are received and your tax organizer is filled out, reviewed, and submitted by you, preparation will begin.
4. **Preparation and review.** I prepare your return and review it carefully, reaching out if anything needs clarification. This typically is about three weeks from time of document collection, including CPA and Client review before filing of returns.
5. **Client Review.** Once I have prepared and reviewed your tax returns, they will be sent to you for client review. I will do an audio recording and walk through your tax returns to help make the client review process easy and efficient**.** This may include some information on tax planning and other things to be aware of before filing your tax returns. Your balance owed (50% of your flat fee) will be due prior to your client review.
6. **Filing.** Once you have reviewed and approved your returns for filing, you will be sent the electronic filing forms, required by the IRS, States, and local (where applicable) to sign. Once I have received your signed electronic filing forms, your tax returns will be filed within three days of receipt. After they are filed, you will receive a notification from me that they are filed and that acknowledgement from federal, State, and local (where applicable) will be uploaded into the portal. Typically, within 48 hours of filing. If your returns are rejected, for any reason, you will be notified, through your secure portal, immediately so that action can be taken to rectify the matter.
7. **After the season.** Tax season will end on April 15th (unless you are on extension). Questions, any tax work, including notice review and response, and meetings from April 16th through December 31st are available at $100 per hour whenever you need them. If your returns are on extension, there will be no additional charges (see Fees and Payment section or FAQs).

Documents to Gather

These are typical tax documents that you may receive for the preparation of your tax returns. A request through the client portal will be made to upload what applies to you. The organizer will prompt for anything else specific to your situation.

- **Income:** Forms W-2, 1099-NEC, 1099-K, 1099-MISC, 1099-R, SSA-1099, and any other income statements
- **Investments:** Forms 1099-B, 1099-DIV, 1099-INT, and consolidated brokerage statements including anything related to digital assets like cryptocurrency
- **Pass-through:** Schedule K-1s from partnerships or S corporations
- **Business:** income and expense summary, vehicle mileage, home office details, and asset purchases
- **Rental property:** rents received, expenses, and closing statements for any purchase or sale
- **Deductions:** Form 1098 mortgage interest, property taxes, charitable contributions, and childcare costs
- **Payments:** federal, state, and local estimated tax payments made during the year
- **Any other documentation deemed necessary**
- **New clients:**
  - Two years of prior-year federal, state, and local returns, and prior depreciation schedules
  - You will also be asked to fill out a taxpayer information form to be submitted to the IRS for two prior years and current year of tax information for me to pull your transcripts or be able to contact the IRS directly

Frequently Asked Questions

When should I send my documents?

You will be sent a tax organizer and document checklist to upload your information after you have signed your engagement letter and paid your 50% retainer fee. Deadline for this is by March 20th to ensure filing by April 15th. It will be typically a three-week process from time of receipt of tax organizer and documents to client review and filing of your returns, so the sooner the information is sent to me, the sooner your returns may get filed. There is no guarantee if you are unable to make that deadline. If your information has not been uploaded and sent to me by April 5th, then an extension to file conversation will be held and you will need to file for that extension. Extended returns are due by October 15th. Returns completed ahead of the April deadline allow time for a thorough review and your review meeting.

What if I have a question, tax work, including notice review and response, or need a meeting after April 15?

I'm glad to help. From April 16th through December 31st, questions, tax work including notice review and response, meetings, and planning sessions are billed at $100 per hour. Your flat fee covers everything through April 15th (unless extended).

Can you help if my business records aren't organized?

Yes. If your business records need to be organized or reconciled before your return can be prepared, that accounting transactional work is quoted separately at a fee of $500 prior to any work on your tax return. An addendum to your engagement letter will need to be signed and payment of the fee will need to be upfront.

I own a small business. Do you offer year-round support?

Yes. My Client Advisory Services pair accounting, tax, and advisory work under one engagement for business owners who want ongoing guidance. Feel free to see my Small Business CAS information.

Will you guarantee a refund?

No preparer can ethically guarantee a refund. What I can promise is a carefully prepared, accurate return that claims every deduction and credit that you may be legitimately entitled to.

Ready to Get Started?

Individual engagements are limited each season. Schedule a Discovery Call to reserve your place.

Samantha M. Besnoff, CPA | Your Financial Maven® LLC | yfmcpa.com