TaxAid and Tax Help for Older People: The gift of an hour

Briefings



22 November 2023

A request from the tax charities: Can you gift us the last hour of your pay this Christmas?

Your support of the tax charities, TaxAid and Tax Help for Older People, enables us to provide our tax advice services, stopping vulnerable people from falling into further financial hardship.

Last year, the two tax charities supported 13,965 vulnerable people through our helplines. We helped to generate £628,240 in tax refunds for people in financial hardship and remitted £834,557 of their tax debt.

The difference your donation can make

The tax charities aim to provide tax help to all who need it. We do this through our helpline services, but also through education on tax and by advocating for our beneficiaries to HMRC.

Last tax year, we saw an influx of issues surrounding tax refund agents. Although some are legitimate and upfront about fees, others charge high fees or make inflated and fraudulent claims. Some clients did not even know they had signed up to a refund agent. We were able to feed this back to HMRC, and were pleased that HMRC ran a consultation about this issue later that year.

Can you donate your last hour?

TaxAid and Tax Help for Older People are the only charities providing specialist tax help for people across the UK. Your generous support enables us to continue and grow our services, reaching more people who need our help.

Together, we can stop vulnerable people, like Emma, from falling into further financial hardship paying tax debts that they do not owe. Please donate your last hour's pay this Christmas.

Emma's story: When tax penalties keep piling up

Emma, a young widow, had to sell her home and move into a one-bedroom flat with her son. She registered as self-employed, but due to learning difficulties and digital illiteracy she did not understand the letters telling her to submit a tax return.

On contacting HMRC, she was pointed to online resources, which made her feel helpless. Letters and penalties continued to arrive, which Emma paid as they came through, hoping this would solve the problem. She paid £4,700 in penalties when her annual income was only £6,000.

We worked with Emma to complete her tax returns and appeal the penalties. She received a full refund, finding herself in a better financial position, with a better understanding of how to manage her taxes going forward.

You can donate to the tax charities through our fundraising campaign, Bridge the Gap, at https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/24753. The funds raised will be split evenly between TaxAid and Tax Help for Older People. You can also use our QR code to donate. Thank you for your generosity.

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