

Certification Test: Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is my respondent ID?

Your "Respondent ID" is the same login name that you used to register to be a volunteer. In general, that will be your: `firstname_lastname`. If your name is Jane Doe, your respondent ID is: `jane_doe`. There are some exceptions for this, so if it does not work for you, contact Center staff at: certification@economicprogress.org to find out what your Respondent ID is.

2. Can I "go back" in the test?

No, you cannot go back to previous pages once you have already viewed them. Even if you did not select answers to the questions on those pages, you are not able to go back and view the page. The grading sheet will count any unanswered questions as incorrect.

3. Can I start the test and then come back into the test and finish it later?

Technically you can finish the test later. However, because you cannot view the same page twice, if you select "finish later" without answering all of the questions on the page you are viewing, the system will count the unanswered questions as incorrect.

4. Why are there questions about (Financial Services) at the end of the test?

These questions will not be scored as part of the test. They are there to provide Center Staff an idea of how many volunteers understand the basic concepts of financial services.

5. Why won't my certificate for the intermediate class print?

There is no certificate for the intermediate class. The online grading system gives the Center for Economic Progress a record that you have successfully completed the test.

6. How do I get help?

If you have any additional questions about the certification process, please contact us at (312) 630-0260 or certification@economicprogress.org.

7. When I get to scenarios 6 and 7 that require tax return preparation, the taxpayer information, like W-2s, was not there! What did I do wrong?

The hosted test system is not the actual test. It is just an automated answer sheet. The hard copy test, IRS Form 6744, contains all of the test information. This red, white and blue booklet is given to volunteers when they come to training. Form 6744 is also available at www.irs.gov, under Forms and Publications.

8. When I'm doing Form 8880 on the Practice Lab and want to enter zero, TaxWise tells me to use F3, but it doesn't work. How can I enter zero?

Use Ctrl and Spacebar. There are many aspects of the Practice Lab are different from TaxWise desktop. Go to Chapter 15 of the Center’s volunteer training manual and read “IRS Practice Lab Quirks.”

9. When entering a W-2 using the Practice Lab, I put the wages in box 1 and nothing is generated in boxes 3 and 5. Why?

The Practice Lab does not recognize entries and make the appropriate calculations until the return has been saved. Save frequently!

10. When I’m using the Practice Lab and I enter the SSN to start a new tax return from the practice test, it doesn’t work. I know that I correctly typed the number from the book. What went wrong?

The SSNs in the book will not work for Practice Lab returns. Every SSN and employer identification number that you use must end with the six-digit Practice Lab User ID that was assigned to you when you registered to use the Practice Lab. For example, the SSN for Howard Stone (practice test taxpayer) is 151-36-5008. If your User ID is 135246, when you start Howard’s return using the Practice Lab, you type this SSN: 151-13-5246.

11. I forgot my User ID for the Practice Lab! Can I have it emailed to me?

No. If you lose the User ID for the Practice Lab, there is no way to retrieve it. Just sign up again as a new user and get a new User ID. Write it down because each time you get a new User ID, you lose access to your work and must start over again.

12. Sometimes when I go to www.voltaxprep.com it takes me to a TaxWise home page – not to the Practice Lab. Is this URL correct?

Yes. That is the correct URL. However, a glitch in the Practice Lab system occasionally redirects users to the TaxWise site. If this happens, access the Practice Lab via www.irs.gov . Search for key words “Link and Learn” and follow the links to the Link and Learn basic test. You will see the Practice Lab icon on the right side of the page.

13. Where can I find all of the test instructions?

The comprehensive instructions for taking the test, including guidelines on using the IRS TaxWise Online Practice Lab, are in Chapter 15 of the Center’s volunteer training manual. Test instructions, as well as useful links, are also available online at www.economicprogress.org. Go to volunteer Resources, Certification Instructions.