

Tax tips

By Pat Von Gemmingen, CPA

Moving to or within Alaska can be a major expense, but there are compensations at tax time. If you moved because of change of job, many costs associated with the move may be deductible-- and it isn't necessary to have had a job lined up before you moved. The eligibility requirements are strict, but if you meet them the tax benefits are pretty attractive.

There are three requirements: you must have moved because of your job, you must work in the new locality for at least 39 of the first 52 weeks following the move (or 78 weeks of the first two years if you are self-employed); and the move must be at least 35 miles. If you decide to go back home before the minimum time is up, you may owe the government some money. That could be the motivation you need to become a sourdough.



Using the short form 1040A or the new 1040EZ for your federal tax can be a labor saver, but it can cost you money if you miss out on allowable deductions. If you use one of the short forms you take standard deduction and can't itemize. By using the long form you can often discover hidden tax

treasures.

Many who use the shorter forms miss out on deductions for moving expenses, unreimbursed business expenses and early withdrawal penalties from savings accounts. One prime hunting ground for tax breaks is a small section on the long form called "miscellaneous deductions." That includes a number of easily overlooked items such as dues in unions or professional societies and employment agency fees.

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