

Payroll News

ACA Form Updates

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[IRS Notice 2016-70](#) was released on November 18th. The highlights of the notice are:

- Extend the deadline for furnishing employees with 1095-B or 1095-C forms from January 31, 2017 to March 2, 2017
- Extend the good faith compliance standard used during 2015. Incomplete or inaccurate forms will not be subject to a penalty, so long as they were filed on time and the filer was operating in good faith
- Do not change the employer filing deadline; the deadline is still February 28 (paper) and March 31 (electronic)



Upcoming Events:

- Monthly Meeting – 12/8 at 5:30PM
- Congress – 5/16-5/20

Time Management

by Lisa Vandervelden

Today is the day. It is Friday and our office will be closed on Monday. Looking forward to that long weekend.

Yesterday, before I left the office, I finished processing payroll, made sure checks were out the door and then made a list

of everything that I needed to do today. I've got a plan. I know where I want to start and I will just go down the list marking things off. Got up, got ready, everything is by the door, just waiting to be scooped up before heading out the door. I'm enjoying one last cup of coffee before I have to

leave the house and then it happened... I checked my email.

Checks were supposed to be delivered to the New York City office today but there I have just been notified by our carrier that delivery is impossible today as they are unable to

get to the office. Employees were able to get to the office but for those that have live checks, there will be no payroll package forthcoming.

So this is the first set back. I'll create a plan, we'll get employees paid another way as soon as I get to the office and then on to my list.

I also see another email come through. "We are proud to announce that we will be opening a new office and we will have 100 new employees starting the week after the holiday in the state of California." We currently have no employees in California.

As I'm throwing the coffee cup in the sink, in a mild panic to get out the door, the phone slips out of my hand, right into a half full coffee cup.

Mental note: Add to my "to do" list - call cell phone carrier to get a replacement if this thing doesn't dry out.

Whew, I have made it to the office. Before I can unlock my door, I have two people (John and Jane) waiting to talk to me. I tell John to give me 10 minutes and come back while escorting Jane into my office to address her issue. As I am trying to turn on my computer and put away my briefcase, she begins. Unfortunately, she does not have my undivided attention so I have to ask again what I can do for her. Issue is finally resolved and John returns. We discuss the changes he wants to make to his retirement plan so I give him direction on this and he leaves. Start checking email again and by the time I remember my list, it is at the bottom of the stack of things I need to do and there is nothing marked off!

Does this sound familiar? How many times has your day started with good intentions, only to end up with those same intentions at the end of the day? Hopefully, this article will assist you in making that "to do list" completely done – or at least mostly complete!

The first mistake made this day was checking my email before I left the house. I did not have the tools (especially, time) to resolve the issues before I left the house and as it turned out, it was merely a distraction to the task at hand which needed my attention – getting out the door. The list I made yesterday was a start to making today a productive day but it was incomplete. Knowing what was on the agenda for the day helped, but my second mistake was not allowing any time for

unexpected issues and interruptions throughout the day.

A good calendar is an invaluable resource for any professional and most electronic calendars can send a reminder to you so that nothing is missed. In the case of the unexpected visitors in my office first thing this morning, I could have handled this much more effectively. By scheduling a time with them to return to my office, I could address the crisis I knew was waiting for me and resolve it quickly. This would have also allowed me to give my undivided attention to the employees that needed my assistance. **Tip:** Calendar *everything* for your workday! (And even on the weekends if you have access outside of the office).

Often in our jobs, we use email as a communication tool for reporting issues that may need to be addressed in a time sensitive manner. Phone calls and voicemails can also be thrown in the mix. **Tip:** Set a specific time each day to check your email, answer calls and return voicemails. It may be as simple as checking email every hour or every two hours. Respond to the simple "yes" / "no" emails or those that require a quick response then add those things that are more time sensitive to the top of your list.

Sometimes a quick phone call can replace an email response. If you have a complicated issue to explain, it may be faster to pick up the phone as opposed to re-writing that email response many times to make sure you have communicated in the way you intended.

Email can also get so cumbersome that important emails are missed because of the non-urgent emails that arrive throughout the day. Almost every email program has the technology to move emails as they come in, to a folder based on rules you set up. For example, if you subscribe to professional email blasts, the best use of your time may not be to read those as they arrive in your inbox. **Tip:** Set up a rule to move those to a folder and set up a time on your calendar to read your publications. Are

there emails that you get on a regular basis that you just don't read, but don't want to get rid of? For example, "What's happening downtown this month?" You may not care about this weekend, but what if you want to know about fun plans for next weekend? Set up a rule to move those to a folder so that if you want to look something up, it's there. Otherwise, it's just clutter.

If the head of the company sends you an email, chances are you will want that email to stand out from the rest. If it is available to you, set up a rule so that your inbox emails are color coded by sender.

Oh, did I ever get a response from accounting regarding the general ledger posting question I had for them? That is not on my list.

I find that it very easy to have something pending and forget to follow up on it at a later date. I was adding each of these pending items to my "to do" list but it wasn't really something for me "to do." It was for someone else. My "to do" list was getting as cluttered as my inbox. So, now I have one item on calendar each day – and often edited throughout the day – that I have named my "Follow up / Plan for Next Day" calendar appointment with a reminder. It is set for about an hour before I want to leave. It has a running list of pending items. I follow up on those and then make my "to do" list for the next day, putting as much on the calendar as possible to set aside time for the tasks that can be planned. **Tip:** Have one "to do" list only for the things that you need to do. Have a pending file or calendar item for those items on someone else's "to do" list.

No two people are exactly the same. What is your most productive time of the day? First thing in the morning, around mid-morning, late afternoon? **Tip:** Plan to do the task that requires the most attention during that time.

What is your least productive time of the day? Right after lunch? Maybe this is a good time to return those phone calls or catch up on filing that's been waiting for you. Or better yet, go for that walk that you said you would start doing every day.

Taking care of yourself (enough sleep, eating

correctly, stress management and exercise) will only increase your productivity.

Any tasks that you have scheduled on your calendar can take the "*this is something I have to do*" thought off of your mind, leaving you to concentrate on the present activity. Put those thoughts away until it is time to perform the task. Similarly, if you have a regular process that is recurring (such as processing a payroll), create a physical folder as well if needed and put everything related to the upcoming processing in it so you do not have to clutter your desk or office – and subsequently your thoughts – with what needs to be done, until it is time to do so. **Tip:** Checklists for regular tasks, keep you on track so you do not have to remember what you have done and what still needs to be done.

Meetings can also be a source of wasted time. Before responding to a meeting request, ask yourself if it is a meeting that you need to attend. Be selective in how you spend your time. It is your time. If you are the meeting organizer, make sure you always have an agenda and a set start and stop time. If you are not the organizer, ask for an agenda if one is not provided. In most organizations, any attendee is free to let the organizer know during the meeting that the time is almost up or the meeting has gone off track. If you see this is happening and cannot speak up, talk to the meeting organizer after the meeting with productive feedback to prevent the issue from recurring.

Remember, it is your time and only you are in charge of what you do with it.

Finally, the end of the day. Not everything is off of the "to do" list, but I have transferred it over to the Tuesday list and have a plan for next week.

On the way home list... get new phone.

Volunteering

Our Chapter has several committees for members to be a part of. This is a wonderful opportunity to volunteer your time and skills to benefit the Chapter. The committees are made up of a Committee Chairperson that is determined by the President and the Board of Directors (must be a National APA member) and Committee

Members. The Committee Members are volunteers who are active members in good standing with the Atlanta Chapter of the APA and must attend 50% of the monthly chapter meetings.

Take a moment to review the committees and their functions on our [website](#). You may find a great fit for your skills and we can

always use the extra hands!

Also, keep an eye on your emails and our social networks for volunteer activities for yourself and often the family as well. Remember that you can also volunteer for any of the various committees that National APA has as well. There is a great [webpage](#) that describes the different

committees as well as the [volunteer sign up form](#) that you should take a few moments to review.



Atlanta Chapter Partners



Global Cash Card

Meeting Speakers and Partnership



Do you have a vendor or contact that would be willing to speak at one of our meetings? Please speak with [CJ Easterling](#) to coordinate this.

We welcome partnership from businesses and higher

education institutions.

If interested in being a partner, please review our [partnership opportunities](#) page and then reach out to our [President](#).

You must register for meetings on the website so we can have an accurate count of attendees.

**ATLANTA CHAPTER
OF THE APA**

Meetings held the second
Thursday of the month at
Crowne Plaza Ravinia
Hotel

4355 Ashford Dunwoody
Road, Atlanta, GA 30346

We're on the Web!

See us at:

<http://apaatlantachapter.com/index.php>

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About Our Organization



We are a nonprofit organization centered on providing continuing education to payroll, accounting and human resource professionals. Along with education, we offer community service opportunities for all members.

We are an autonomous and independent Chapter of the American Payroll Association.