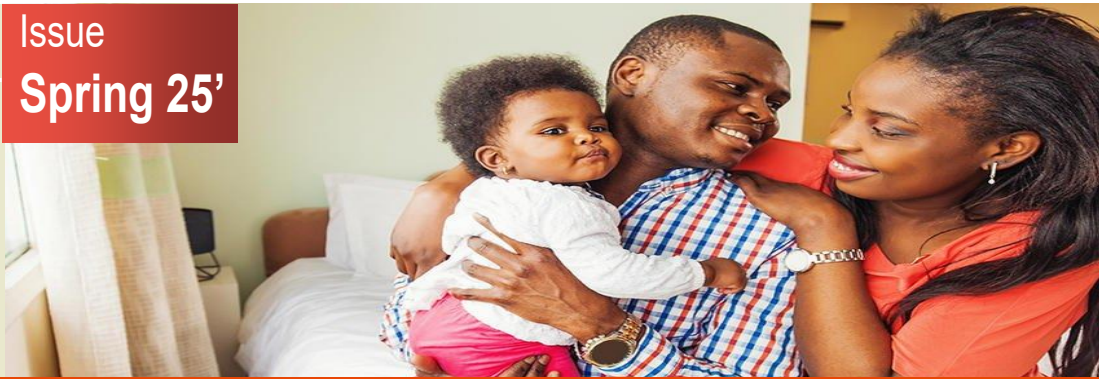


Current Topics

Understanding Credit Pt. 1
All Doors Lead Home
NE Child Care Tax Credit
Kids Space
Imagination Library
VITA Free Tax Services



A Seasonal Insight into the LHA Family Self-Sufficiency Program

Future Forward

Current Topics >>>

Housing and Utility Assistance

All Doors Lead Home Coordinated Entry System is the City of Lincoln's approach to organizing and providing housing services to prevent homelessness. This process is designed to ensure that individuals and families with the highest vulnerability and service needs receive top priority.

If you are in need of housing or utility assistance, the first step is to complete the Triage tool application.



Homeless Prevention Triage Tool:
https://ssp.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8CwGTxZUyJ6XPjE



Starting to Understand Your Credit Part 1

When people refer to your credit, they are speaking about your credit history. This would describe how you handled your money and bills in the past. Credit helps lenders decide if they want to do business with you. Examples of credit history are How many credit cards do you have? How many loans do you have? Do you pay your bills on time, or are you late on payments? Your credit history can make a big difference when you are applying for a loan or credit card, looking to rent an apartment, or buying a car.

The first step of increasing your credit score is to look at your credit report. Your credit report is a summary of your personal information and credit history. Businesses pay the credit bureaus to check your credit before they decide to lend you money. The three nationwide credit bureaus are **TransUnion, Equifax, and Experian.** The three credit bureaus will let you get your report for free online at Annualcreditreport.com. It is important to monitor your credit report and dispute any information that is incorrect.

Congratulations to the two families who graduated from the FSS program this last quarter by completing their contract goals.

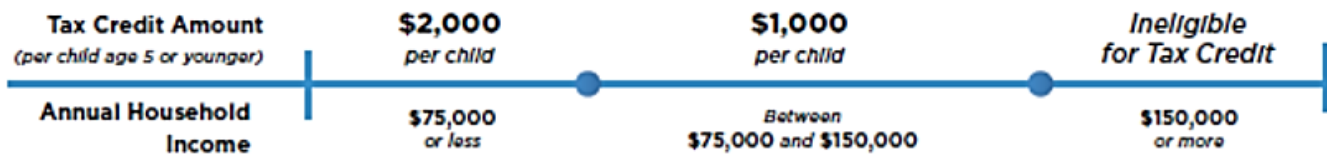
In 2021, Tara joined the FSS program to work on her educational goals, including completing her LPN degree at Southeast Community College in 2022. Tara and her family have been sharing one vehicle, which made it difficult to manage. Through the FSS program Tara was able to increase her credit score and was connected to Chariots4Hope. Chariots4Hope gifted Tara and her family a van in September and has removed transportation barriers. Tara stated, "I'm extremely grateful for what I do have and the opportunities I've been able to come into,"



NEW NEBRASKA CHILD CARE TAX CREDIT

NebraskaChildCareTaxCredit.org

This new Nebraska Child Care Tax Credit is a refundable tax credit for working parents or legal guardians of one or more children aged 5 or younger. Your family must meet certain household income guidelines to be eligible for the credit. Refundable credits are subtracted from the amount you owe in your state income tax. If the amount of your credit is larger than your tax liability, the difference is refunded to you. Eligible individuals will need to apply PRIOR to filing their Nebraska tax return.



Be Prepared

Gather the information you'll need to complete your tax credit application. This includes:

- # Social Security numbers for you and your dependent children 5 years old or younger.
- \$ Total household income for 2024. Remember, your **household income must be less than \$150,000** to claim the credit.
- 👤 Details about your child care program.

Learn more about the required information for your application at bit.ly/cctc-r-requiredinfo

Step 2: Fill out and submit your application

You can submit your tax credit application (Form 7203) in two ways:

- ✉ Complete a printed copy of the application form available on the Nebraska Department of Revenue (NDOR) website and mail it to NDOR (via USPS) as soon as possible, **OR**
- 📶 Complete and submit your application electronically through the eDASH application hub on the NDOR website. NDOR recommends using eDASH to get your approval more quickly.

Access the eDASH system or download Form 7203 at bit.ly/Child-Care-Tax-Credit-Refundable

Step 3: Claim the tax credit

When you receive your approved tax credit application from the Nebraska Department of Revenue, it will include a certification number and the amount of the approved credit.

- 📝 Enter the certification number and total amount of the tax credit on line 46 of your state income tax return.
- \$ The amount of your credit will reduce the amount of any taxes you owe. If your credit is larger than your tax bill, the difference will be refunded to you.



How do I know if I'm eligible?

To be eligible for the refundable Child Care Tax Credit, **your annual household income must be \$150,000 or less**. At least one of the following conditions must apply:

- ▶ You have a child or children age 5 or younger enrolled in a licensed child care program, **OR**
- ▶ Your child(ren) receives care from a license-exempt provider who participates in the child care subsidy, **OR**
- ▶ Your total annual household income is less than or equal to 100% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).



Nebraska Department of Revenue Child Care Tax Credit Act Webpage
bit.ly/Child-Care-Tax-Credit-Act

This webpage provides application instructions and the Electronic Document & Application Submission Hub (eDASH) for submitting applications.



Nebraska Child Care Tax Credit Campaign Website
NebraskaChildCareTaxCredit.org

Information and resources you can use to help spread the word about the tax credits.



Kids Space

CELEBRATING!

1 in 7 Children

under the age of five in the USA
receives Imagination Library books



Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is dedicated to helping inspire a love of reading by gifting **FREE** books to children from birth to age five, through funding shared by Dolly Parton and Local Program Partners in five countries. Once your child is registered, they will receive a **FREE** high-quality, age-appropriate book addressed to them in the mail each month, until their 5th birthday. Any child from birth to the age of five, living in Lancaster County can register.

Visit imaginationlibrary.com or scan the QR code to complete your registration. Your child will receive their first book eight to ten weeks after your registration form has been received. Books will begin arriving at your home and will continue until your child turns five or you move out of a covered area.

'Why I Want to Go to College' Sweepstakes

Do you have a seventh or eighth grade student who wants to go to college?

Nest 529, Omaha Storm Chasers and The Nebraska State Treasurer's Office announced their 23rd annual "Why I Want to Go to College" writing sweepstakes for all seventh and eighth students. Students are asked to reflect on the value of education and what they hope to achieve through higher education. Entries are limited to 750 words and should be sent to Aniya Tate, Omaha Storm Chasers, 12356 Ballpark Way, Papillion, NE 68046. Entries must be postmarked by Monday, March 31, 2025.

Each Nebraska winner will receive four tickets to the May 18th Storm Chasers game at Werner Park in Papillion where they will be recognized during a brief ceremony before the game. 1st place winner will receive \$2,000 contribution to the Nebraska 529 Plan, 2nd place winner will receive \$1,000 contribution and 3rd place winner will receive \$500 contribution.

Essay must include a cover sheet. Find more info at <https://nest529.com/scholarships-and-contests/>



FREE Community Tax Preparation 2024 Federal and Nebraska State Returns

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Site Schedule

Must have an APPOINTMENT

To schedule go to <https://vita.unl.edu/signup/> beginning January 15th

Please choose a site location, date, and time.

All sites listed below will be face-to-face and require an appointment.

Virtual preparation is available, in addition to facilitated self-assistance (FSA) Self-Prepared.

All sites will follow local health department guidelines and are ADA approved.

	SITE NAME	ADDRESS	Hours	DATES AVAILABLE
MONDAY	American Job Center	1330 N Street Suite A	10:00AM to 3:00PM	Feb 3rd-Apr 7th (Closed Feb 17th)
TUESDAY	Victor Anderson Library	3635 Touzalin Ave	4:00PM to 6:00PM	Feb 4th – Apr 1st
WEDNESDAY	Loren Eiseley Library	1530 Superior Street	4:30PM to 6:30PM	Feb 5th - Apr 9th
	Asian Community and Culture Center	114 N 44 th Street, Ste A	10:00AM to 12:00PM	Feb 5 th -Mar 26 th
	Southeast Community College	8800 O Street, T-102	2:00PM to 4:00PM	Feb 5th- Apr 9th (Closed Mar 12th)
THURSDAY	Southeast Community College	8800 O Street, T-102	2:30PM to 5:30PM	Feb 6th- Apr 10th (Closed Mar 13th)
	Loren Eiseley Library	1530 Superior Street	1:00PM to 4:00PM	Feb 6th - Apr 10th
SATURDAY	Nebraska East Union	1705 Arbor Dr	10:00AM to 3:00PM	Feb 1st- Apr 5th (Closed Mar 15 th & 22 nd)
SUNDAY	Bennett Martin Library	136 S 14 th St	1:00PM to 3:00PM	Feb 2nd – Mar 30th
	Good Neighbor Center	2617 Y Street	1:00PM to 3:00PM	Feb 16th – Mar 30th

*East Campus: Enter on Holdrege and 35th.

*Southeast Community College-Lincoln Campus Room T-102. Park in the North Parking Lot and Enter thru Door 10

If Lincoln Public Schools and/or UNL are closed due to bad weather then all VITA sites are closed. For more information call 2-1-1, visit <https://vita.unl.edu/>



If you have questions, contact Lincoln VITA (Tax Credit Alliance of Nebraska)
Email vita@unl.edu or 402.472.0857

Scan to schedule your appointment today



TO HAVE YOUR TAXES PREPARED, BRING or UPLOAD:

IDENTIFICATION:

- **Social Security Cards** or **ITIN Letters** for EVERYONE who will be included on the return
- **Photo ID** for ALL tax return signers (BOTH spouses must sign if filing jointly)

INCOME:

- **W-2s** for wages, **W-2Gs** for gambling income
- **1099s** for interest, dividends, unemployment, state tax refunds, pension or 401-K distributions, and other income
- **Records** of revenue including cash from self-employment and side hustles

EXPENSES:

- **1098s** for mortgage interest, student loan interest (1098-E), or tuition (1098-T), statement of property tax paid
- **Statement of college student account** showing all charges and payments for each student on the return
- **Childcare receipts**, including tax ID, phone number, and address for childcare provider
- **Records** of expenses for self-employment or home-based businesses

Other Documentation:

- **Checking or Savings account information for direct deposit/ direct debit**
- **1095s** showing creditable health insurance coverage

Last year's tax return – **REQUIRED** for MyFreeTaxes self-preparation

PLEASE NOTE: The IRS defines the scope of work that is prepared at VITA.
If your return is considered “out of scope” for this site, our VITA
Volunteers will not be able to prepare your return.

OUT of SCOPE:

- **CANNOT** prepare the return if reporting **Cryptocurrency**
- **CANNOT** prepare the return if a **Depreciation schedule** is required or a **Schedule F (Farm)** is required
- **CANNOT** prepare the return if self-employed:
 - Has a net loss
 - Has self-employed, SEP, SIMPLE, or qualified retirement plans
 - Has more than \$35,000 in expenses
 - Has employees
- **CANNOT** prepare a return with **casualty or theft losses**

SITES May Be Able to Prepare:

- **MAY** be able to prepare a return with **Schedule E (rental income)** or **Schedule K-1 (partnership or trust income)**
- **MAY** be able to prepare a return with income from **dividends, capital gains, or minimal brokerage transactions**
- **NOT** all sites prepare multiple state returns



For Snap (Food Stamp Program) assistance please call the
SNAP Outreach hotline at 1-855-444-5556



To download our schedule, scan the QR code with your phone.