BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS TO TAX FILING FOR PEOPLE LIVING ON LOW INCOMES

Canadians with low incomes are missing out on important income boosting opportunities because they do not file tax. Prosper Canada surveyed over 300 practitioners and experts who work with people living on low incomes to find out why. The results identified significant roadblocks they are facing and the groups most likely to be affected.

TAX FILING ROADBLOCKS

What are the three biggest barriers to tax filing among Canadians living on low income? Experts who identified a particular barrier as significant.

 Survey respondents identified the greatest barriers faced by the communities they serve. The chart shows the percentage of experts who identified a barrier as significant.

NINE WAYS TO REMOVE ROADBLOCKS TO TAX FILING

A simplified filing process would make tax filing easier. The complexity of the tax system and of tax forms is intimidating and can lead to errors. Online software, prompts, and new partnerships can help overcome geographic barriers.

 poor access to affordable and relevant services

THE BIG ROADBLOCKS

Lack of TARGETED APPROACHES to the distinct barriers and needs of different groups

The good news is that organizations across Canada have found innovative ways to remove roadblocks. We reviewed solutions offered by survey respondents and had conversations with influencers in the field to identify promising solutions.

Which groups are most affected by these barriers?

Families and single parents People with physical and mental health challenges Newcomers

COMMUNICATIONS

The message matters. Organizations can get their own spin on tax clinics to show people how tax filing can help them. Teaching students the importance of tax filing and providing them with key skills for the future.

A simplified filing process would make tax filing easier. Organizations can put their own spin on tax clinics to show people how tax filing can help them. Organizations can build upon the CVITP model.

ACCESS

Stream more resources to the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVITP) to increase the number of free income tax clinics.

When it comes to tax help, not all needs are the same. Organizations can get their own spin on tax clinics to show people how tax filing can help them.

TARGETED APPROACHES

Mistrust or fear of government documents
cost of commercial tax services

Trusted intermediaries can help increase access and availability of tax filing supports. They can build trust and help overcome geographic barriers.

When it comes to tax help, not all needs are the same. Organizations can help overcome geographic barriers.

Collaboration with large service sectors can help increase access and awareness of tax filing supports. Organizations can build upon the CVITP model to increase access to tax help and apply for benefits.

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