

As we begin the new year, I write to send best wishes to you and your loved ones. I am grateful for the opportunity to have worked with so many of you and in 2024 will be sharing periodic updates about the U.S. immigration system.

Here, I share tips for immigrants and their families as we enter tax season. See, "Three Ways that Immigration Officials Review Tax Returns."

If you know someone who could benefit from this information, kindly forward this email. I look forward to serving you.

In gratitude,  
Kara



Para Español

## Three ways that immigration officials look at tax returns

Originally posted by Kara Hart for *Think Immigration* blog

Throughout the year, clients send me copies of tax returns required in support of their immigration process. At times, clients are dismayed to learn that errors on these tax returns could lead to delays or even denials of immigration benefits like permanent residence or naturalization. So, as we enter tax season, I urge anyone involved in a U.S. immigration process to please use a qualified tax professional to prepare your tax return! When immigration officials review tax returns, they may be asking several questions, including:

**1. Does this person make enough money to sponsor the immigrant?** If not, the person must have enough liquid assets or a co-sponsor whose income will meet the financial requirements of sponsorship.

Understandably, most people hope to pay as little as possible in taxes. However, underreporting of income may not only be unlawful under U.S. tax laws but also counterproductive to the U.S. immigration case.

**2. Is this is a good faith marriage?** When petitioning for a spouse, a tax return can help to prove that the couple married in good faith, meaning with the intention of making a life together. If the sponsor claims to be "Single" on a tax return presented in support of a marriage-based immigration petition, it can seriously undermine the couple's credibility. In general, you can't be married for purposes of immigration and single for purposes of filing your tax returns.

**3. Is this person willing to follow the laws of the United States?** Often, immigration officials have discretion to grant or deny an immigration benefit. If immigration officials think the person lied to the IRS, they may wonder if the person is being truthful in the immigration process. Unfortunately, glaring errors on a tax return could make an immigration official less inclined to give someone the benefit of the doubt when most needed.

Of course, U.S. tax and immigration laws are extremely complex, and it is easy to make honest mistakes. Yet the stakes in immigration cases are often so high so that it is critical to work with qualified tax professionals who are committed filing proper and accurate returns. It can be the difference between winning and losing your immigration case. Please!



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If you have questions about Immigration sponsorship, please call to schedule a consultation with Kara.