

Looking for a new job? You may be able to deduct the cost of your job search on your tax return.

If you're one of the many people searching for a job right now, you may be able to deduct some of your expenses, such as attending career fairs, on your tax return *as long as you are looking for a new job in your current occupation*. Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- Job search expenses fall into the category of miscellaneous itemized deductions on Schedule A, *Itemized Deductions*. If your total itemized deductions are higher than the standard deduction, it is generally better to choose to include your itemized deductions. Also, in most cases these expenses must exceed your adjusted gross income by 2 percent to provide a tax benefit.
- Your expenses must be spent on a job search in your *current occupation*. You may not deduct expenses incurred while looking for a job in a new occupation.
- You can deduct the fees you pay for employment and outplacement agencies. If your employer pays you back in a later year for these fees, you must include the amount in your gross income *up to the amount of your tax benefit in the earlier year*.
- You can deduct amounts you spend for preparing and mailing copies of a résumé to prospective employers.
- If you travel to a different area to look for a new job, you may be able to deduct travel expenses to and from that area. You can deduct the travel expenses only if the trip is primarily to look for a new job. The amount of time you spend on personal activity compared to the amount of time you spend looking for work is important in determining whether the trip is primarily personal or primarily to look for a new job.
- You cannot deduct job search expenses if there was a substantial break between the end of your last job and the time you begin looking for a new one.
- You cannot deduct job search expenses if you are looking for a job for the first time.

For more information about job search expenses, read IRS [Publication 529, Miscellaneous Deductions](#). This publication is available at the IRS website, [IRS.gov](#), or by calling 800-TAX-FORM (800-829-3676).

Below are links to IRS publications, tax topics and videos describing the tax benefits available to people searching for jobs.

- IRS Publication 529, [Miscellaneous Deductions](#)
- Tax Topic 508, [Miscellaneous Expenses](#)
- Tax Topic 511, [Business Travel Expenses](#)
- YouTube: Job Search Expenses: [English](#), [Spanish](#), [ASL](#)