

Beaches Emergency Assistance Ministry clients file for \$500,000 in tax refunds

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By [Shorelines](#)

With the economy in a slump, record numbers of people turned to the Beaches Emergency Assistance Ministry this year for help with income taxes.

BEAM's team of IRS-trained volunteer tax preparers served about twice the number of clients and doubled the amount of money saved for people, the agency said Friday.

Volunteers filed for about \$500,000 in tax refunds for 375 clients, saving clients \$75,000 in tax prep fees, said BEAM tax team leader Rick Glawe.

Last year, clients got a total \$250,000 in refunds. BEAM expected to help with about 200 returns this year.

Seventeen volunteers donated 1,000 hours of service to BEAM in partnership with United Way's REAL\$ense Prosperity Campaign to help families with their taxes, Glawe said.

BEAM has been offering the tax assistance program for four years.

Those with a family income under \$56,000 qualify for the free tax preparation services, except for those who have sold stocks, a business or real estate or operate a small business. Photo IDs, Social Security cards, W-2 forms and 1099 forms are among the documents necessary for the tax preparation.

BEAM is a 25-year-old social service agency founded by churches that helps families stay in their homes and become self-sufficient. BEAM offers a food pantry, rent and utility assistance, food stamp application help, services for job-seekers, and school supplies and dental services for children at Back to School with BEAM. For more information or to volunteer, call 241-7437, ext. 1, e-mail jaxBEAM@bellsouth.net or go to www.jaxbeam.org.