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**MEIC**  
**State & Local Tax Training**  
**TaxSlayer and the Michigan Return**  
**November 18, 2016**

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*The information contained below is not an exclusive list of issues identified with the TaxSlayer Pro Online software. We have attempted to highlight information that you will find useful as you begin working in the Practice Lab.*

**Notes for Using the Practice Lab**

- Social Security numbers – Use 00 for the fourth and fifth numbers of all Social Security numbers on practice returns. (Note: When starting a new return, TaxSlayer has defaulted these numbers to 00 already; however, it's recommended you use 00 as the fourth and fifth numbers for all Social Security numbers entered on the return.)
- Do not be concerned with duplicating Social Security numbers with other users; there can be duplicates in the Practice Lab.

**TIPS for WORKING in TAXSLAYER**

- The time-out for inactivity is 17 minutes; you will get a warning window.
- The tax forms will print in ALL CAPS regardless of how the user types in the entries.
- Use the TAB key to navigate between fields. Pressing the Enter key will *not* move your cursor to the next field.
- Filing Status Wizard – We suggest determining the filing status on your own as we are uncertain at this time that the wizard determines certain filing statuses accurately.
- Do not type leading zeroes when entering a date of birth.
- There is a field for an apartment number in the Personal Information section. Enter only the apartment number (six characters maximum), do not type "Apt".

On the printed return, the apartment number will show up in the *Apt. no.* box on the federal Form 1040. On the Michigan return, the word "APT" followed by the apartment number will show on the address line of all Michigan forms.

- Saving information in the return:
  - In the Federal section of the return, information is saved when you click on Continue, typically located at the bottom of the screen.
  - In the State section of the return, information is saved **ONLY** when you have finished the State return and have hit Continue on all of the screens. You will get a warning if you try to exit off of the State return without having finished the return.

**IMPORTANT:** If you know you will not be finishing all of the needed pages in the State return or you will be timing out, click on Continue on all of the pages so that information you have already entered in the State return will be saved.

➤ Navigating within a tax return:

- Below is a screen shot of a return during return tax preparation:
  - Listed in the left side panel is the Main Menu which lists the various sections of a tax return. The highlighted red section tells us that we are in the Basic Information section.
  - The toolbar at the top shows the pages within a section. In the Basic Information section we have pages for Filing Status, Personal Information, and Dependents.

The screenshot shows the 'Practice Lab' interface. At the top, there are two green boxes displaying '\$2,538 Federal Refund' and '\$938 MI Refund Amount'. To the right, there are links for 'Help' and 'Preview Return'. Below this is a navigation bar with 'david jones' and three tabs: 'Filing Status', 'Personal Information' (highlighted in red), and 'Dependents'. On the left is a dark sidebar menu with a search box 'Enter the Form Number..' and a list of items: 'Basic Information' (highlighted in red), 'Federal Section', 'Health Insurance', 'State Section', 'Summary/Print', 'e-File', '2015 Amended Return', 'Save & Exit Return', and 'Scanned Documents'. The main content area is titled 'Basic Information' and contains three rows: 'Filing Status' with an 'EDIT' button, 'Personal Information' with an 'EDIT' button, and 'Dependents / Qualifying Person' with an 'EDIT' button. At the bottom of this section are two buttons: a red 'Cancel' button and a green 'Continue' button.

- When you click on Client Search on the Welcome Page, and open a return from the Client List, TaxSlayer opens to the Summary/Print section as shown in the screen shot below:
  - If you want to get back to the Main Menu at any point, click on the Menu symbol shown at the top left of the screen:

The screenshot shows the 'Practice Lab' interface. At the top, there are two green boxes displaying '\$2,538 Federal Refund' and '\$938 MI Refund Amount'. To the right, there is a 'Help' link. Below this is a navigation bar with 'david jones' and two tabs: 'Summary' (highlighted in red) and 'Print Results'. On the left, there is a 'MENU' icon (three horizontal lines) circled in green, with a green arrow pointing from it to the left. The main content area is titled 'Calculation Summary' and contains a 'Preview Return' button. Below this is a 'Form 1040 page:' indicator with buttons for '1' and '2'. A green 'Summary View' button is also present. The bottom part of the screen shows a preview of a tax form: 'Form 1040 U.S. Individual Income Tax Return (99) 2015'. The form includes fields for 'Your first name and initial' (david |), 'Last name' (jones), and 'Your social security number' (133 | 00 | 1230). There is also a field for 'Spouse's social security number'.

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## **TIPS for WORKING in the STATE SECTION:**

- Disability:
  - In the **Michigan State Return** section of TaxSlayer, click on the tab for **Basic Information** to enter information for individuals who are deaf, blind, paraplegic, quadriplegic, hemiplegic, or totally and permanently disabled. Also for those who are qualified disabled veterans.
- Pension Subtraction:
  - Click on **Subtractions from Income**. Scroll down to the bottom of the next screen and click on **Deductions for Taxpayers Born before 1953**. Then scroll up on the next screen to view all options here.
- Homestead Property Tax Credit and Home Heating Credit Claims:
  - Click on **Credits**. Then click on the Begin tab for Homestead Property Tax and Home Heating Credit (MI-1040CR, MI-1040CR2 and MI-1040CR7).
  - On the **Homestead Property Tax and Home Heating Credit (MI-1040CR, MI-1040CR2 and MI-1040CR7)** page, scroll down to enter Nontaxable Income and medical insurance or HMO premiums.

The entry box for medical insurance or HMO premiums is the last entry box on this page. Medicare premiums deducted from Social Security benefits and entered on the SSA-1099 page do not have to be entered here.
  - After entering any nontaxable income and medical insurance premiums, scroll back up on the page and click on the Begin tab for the applicable credit claim(s).
- City Returns:
  - For City of Detroit returns, click on **Miscellaneous Forms**.
  - For the Michigan Cities Common Form and City of Port Huron returns, click on the tab **Localities**.

(Note: The Michigan Cities Common Form and Port Huron returns are not available in the Practice Lab for 2015 as of 11/16/2016.)
- Locating Michigan Forms and Schedules:
  - The search box for forms that is located at the top left of the Main Menu page is for federal forms only.
  - To locate a Michigan form or schedule, you will need to click on all of the tabs in the State section until you locate it.

Be aware that the not all forms and schedules are in the appropriate tab. Example: Michigan Form 5049 is in the Income Subject to Tax Folder, instead of Miscellaneous Forms.

## **EXPECTED CHANGES in the LIVE VERSION**

- The age of the taxpayer and spouse as of the end of the tax year will be shown on the Personal Information page once a date of birth is entered.
- There will be additional fields on the Personal Information page regarding the State return.
- In the Dependents section when marking the circle for a dependent who is disabled, the subsequent field asking for the type of disability will be removed.
- The field for Bank Name in the Direct Deposit section will either not be required or will be removed.