

Keep tabs on work-related spending

Every time you spend money for something that is related to your work, keep the receipt or cancelled check. Many of these expenses unknowingly may be deducted on your federal income tax return, according to the Michigan Association of Certified Public Accountants.

A carpenter or a doctor, as an example, could deduct the cost of tools and instruments used in their work if the items last a year or less. Support the deduction of each tool or instrument by noting its cost and business necessity. Any items with a longer life may have to be depreciated and since that could get complicated, a tax advisor may need to be consulted.

You can deduct dues paid to a professional society, a trade association or Chamber of Commerce that acts to promote your business interests. Subscriptions to professional journals and the cost of books related to your job are also deductible.

As a member of a union you can deduct union dues and initiation fees. Any assessments paid to a pension fund for unemployment benefits in order to stay in the union and hold a union job are deductible too.

Uniforms and special work clothes, if they are required for the job and can't be worn anywhere else, along

with the cost of cleaning, laundering and repairing these clothes are tax deductible. Uniforms worn by nurses, letter carriers, fire fighters, waitresses, and dental technicians are some examples of deductible work clothes.

What else is deductible? If you wear a jacket, cap or shirt that bears the name of your company or of your position; the cost of a wrist watch and the cost of repair if your employer requires you to wear it; safety shoes worn by factory workers; work gloves; and rubber boots used by commercial fishermen also fit into this category.

Special clothing worn solely during performances by entertainers and musicians can be included too. A salesperson for a high-fashion clothing boutique who is required to purchase the store's clothing and wear it on the job may deduct these costs as long as the clothes are not worn socially.

You can deduct what it costs to travel between two of your employer's locations in the same city. If you are required to leave the city where you usually work to handle business in another location temporarily, your living costs are deductible.

Are you a moonlighter with two jobs? Whatever it costs to commute to your second job is also deductible. Educational expenses are deductible

If the studies are required by the employer, or if they maintain or improve your job skills, or if they help you keep your existing job.

For example, if your employer requires that you get a master's degree, you can deduct the cost. Even if you take a leave of absence, the cost is deductible because you intend to return to the same type of work once your studies are completed.

Deductible educational expenses include tuition, textbooks and fees. Travel expenses including tolls and parking fees between your job and your school qualify too.

Polish festival launched by Orchard Lake St. Mary

Roll out the carpets, you'll have a barrel of fun. . . . The Monks and Dads Club of St. Mary's Preparatory in Orchard Lake will host its eighth annual Polish Country Fair on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

The fair will include the "third-largest estate garage sale in the world" and feature music by the Monerays, Harmony Kings, Sparks of Fire and Little Joe and the Polka Boys.

Polish folk dancing will swing with the Syrena Dance Ensemble, Tatry Dancers, Poznan Dancers, Rzeszow Dancers and the Opole Dancers.

The fair will run from 5-11 p.m. on Friday. The Redford Union Unicycle Club will kick off Saturday events at 2 p.m. Mass will be at 5 p.m. The fair will end that day at 11 p.m.

Mass in the Shrine-Chapel of Orchard Lake at 11 a.m. will start Sunday's activities, which continue through 9 p.m.

The school is located at Orchard Lake and Commerce roads. Call 682-1885 for more details.

MIKE HAVIS, ICSA Lic. #56587 357-2777 Call to appointment.

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