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Fact Sheet: 13 Million Fathers Benefit From Tax Credits for Lower-Income Working Families

Two working-family tax credits — the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Tax Credit (CTC) — have proven to be powerful tools for reducing children’s poverty and advancing their long-term well-being.¹ About 13 million fathers in low- and moderate-income working families received either the EITC or the low-income portion of the CTC in 2012. (For data on how the credits help mothers, see “21 Million Mothers Benefit from Tax Credits for Lower-Income Working Families.”)

Internal Revenue Service (IRS) figures show that over 26 million Americans claimed the EITC, including about 20 million filers with children. A mostly overlapping group of 19 million parents claimed the low-income (that is, refundable) CTC. We estimate that about 2 million single fathers and 11 million couples that include a father² received one or both credits. Our estimates are based on IRS data, additional state tax information from the Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program, and national-level Census data on the gender of tax credit recipients.

The table shows the figures for fathers (married or single) by state. In most states, more than 150,000 fathers received one or both credits. Even the least populous states, such as Vermont and Wyoming, over 18,000 fathers received this help.

¹ Chuck Marr *et al.*, “EITC and Child Tax Credit Promote Work, Reduce Poverty, and Support Children’s Development, Research Finds,” Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, revised April 3, 2015, <http://www.cbpp.org/research/eitc-and-child-tax-credit-promote-work-reduce-poverty-and-support-childrens-development>.

² These figures treat same-sex married couples as unmarried for tax purposes because the Census Bureau’s 2013 tax model, which these calculations rely on, had not yet incorporated recent Supreme Court and IRS rulings allowing legally married same-sex couples to file together.

TABLE 1

Fathers With EITC or Refundable Child Tax Credit, Fiscal Year 2012

50 States + DC	12,999,000
Alabama	250,000
Alaska	23,000
Arizona	324,000
Arkansas	147,000
California	1,894,000
Colorado	177,000
Connecticut	93,000
Delaware	32,000
Dist. of Columbia	15,000
Florida	900,000
Georgia	494,000
Hawaii	50,000
Idaho	87,000
Illinois	520,000
Indiana	243,000
Iowa	93,000
Kansas	108,000
Kentucky	180,000
Louisiana	186,000
Maine	44,000
Maryland	181,000
Massachusetts	154,000
Michigan	362,000
Minnesota	148,000
Mississippi	152,000
Missouri	211,000
Montana	38,000
Nebraska	67,000
Nevada	131,000
New Hampshire	31,000
New Jersey	275,000
New Mexico	102,000
New York	722,000
North Carolina	447,000
North Dakota	16,000
Ohio	405,000
Oklahoma	162,000
Oregon	156,000
Pennsylvania	383,000
Rhode Island	31,000
South Carolina	195,000
South Dakota	30,000
Tennessee	326,000
Texas	1,393,000
Utah	147,000
Vermont	18,000
Virginia	265,000
Washington	248,000
West Virginia	72,000
Wisconsin	178,000
Wyoming	18,000

Source: CBPP estimates based on data from IRS, unpublished data from the Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program, and CBPP analysis of the Census Bureau's March 2010-March 2014 Current Population Survey.