

APPENDIX 3X

Form 944 Preparation Checklist

Company: _____ Year: _____

Completed By: _____ Date: _____

Reviewed By: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: This checklist provides guidance for preparing and reviewing the 2023 Form 944 (*Employer's Annual Federal Tax Return*). "No" answers indicate possible errors in completing the Form 944. Any additional steps performed or unusual matters noted while completing Form 944 should be documented in the client's file.

Note: This checklist applies to the 2023 Form 944. The checklist for the 2024 Form 944 will be posted on the Thomson Reuters PPC and Quickfinder updates website at www.thomsonreuters.com/en-us/help/ppc-and-quickfinder-updates/ppc-aa-updates.html when it becomes available in late 2024.

Item	Yes	No	N/A
General			
1. Has the employer been notified in writing by the IRS to file Form 944?			
2. Has the official form been downloaded from the IRS website or a substitute form that complies with IRS procedures been used? (Any substitute Form 944 should follow the general specifications for a substitute form in IRS Pub. 1167.)			
<p>Note: The form available on the IRS website can be completed online and then printed.</p>			
3. Are:			
a. Dollar entries made without dollar signs and decimals? (Commas are optional.)			
b. Data fields with a value of zero left blank (except line 9)?			
c. Negative amounts indicated by using a minus sign?			
d. Name and EIN on all pages?			
e. Name, EIN, "Form 944", and the tax period on all attachments?			
f. No fonts other than 12-point Courier font used (if possible) for all entries that are typed or if a computer is used to complete the form?			
g. Multiple sheets stapled in the upper left corner?			
4. Is the following information correctly stated on the return:			
a. Employer identification number?			
b. Employer name and trade name?			
c. Address (including, if applicable, foreign country information)?			
5. Are address changes or changes to the employer's responsible party reported by completing and mailing Form 8822-B (Change of Address or Responsible Party—Business) to the IRS?			

Item	Yes	No	N/A
Wage and Tax Withholding Information			
6. Is the total of all wages paid, tips reported, taxable fringe benefits provided, and other compensation paid to employees during the year that would be reported in box 1 of Form W-2 entered on line 1 even if the employer does not have to withhold income or FICA taxes on the payments? [Nonpayroll payments (e.g., pensions, annuities, or gambling winnings) should not be included even if income tax was withheld on them; such payments should be reported on Form 945.]			
7. Is the amount of federal income tax withheld from wages, tips, taxable fringe benefits, and other compensation (including supplemental unemployment compensation benefits) entered on line 2?			
8. If the employer paid qualified wages in 2023 that are eligible for COVID-19-related payroll tax credits, have the applicable worksheets in the Form 944 instructions been completed to determine the nonrefundable and refundable portion of the credits for COVID-19 qualifying sick leave and family leave wages paid?			
9. For reporting social security and Medicare wages and tips:			
a. If wages, tips, and other compensation are not subject to social security or Medicare taxes, is the box on line 3 checked?			
b. Are social security wages, COVID-19 emergency qualified sick leave wages, COVID-19 expanded qualified family leave wages, social security tips, and Medicare wages and tips properly reported in column 1 on lines 4a, 4a(i), 4a(ii), 4b, and 4c, respectively? No employee's wages in excess of the social security wage base (\$160,200 in 2023) should be included on lines 4a, 4a(i), 4a(ii), and 4b. There is no limit on the Medicare wage base included on line 4c.			
c. Once an employee's Medicare wages exceed \$200,000 in the calendar year, are all Medicare wages above the \$200,000 annual threshold also properly reported in column 1 of line 4d?			
d. Are the calculations of the taxes in column 2 of lines 4a, 4a(i), 4a(ii), 4b, 4c, and 4d mathematically correct?			
10. Is the calculated amount entered on line 5 correct (line 2 + line 4e)?			
11. Are the differences between line 4e and the amounts actually withheld from the employee's paychecks caused by rounding fractions of cents entered on line 6?			
12. Are the social security and Medicare taxes included in column 2 on lines 4a, 4a(i), 4a(ii), 4b, 4c, and 4d for which the employer is not responsible for withholding (such as the uncollected employee's share of taxes on tips, uncollected former employee's share of taxes on group-term life insurance, or withholdings from third-party sick pay), included on line 6 as a reduction of social security and Medicare taxes due?			
13. If the employer is a qualified small business claiming a payroll tax credit for its research activities, has the amount from line 12 of Form 8974 been entered on line 8a of Form 944?			
14. Is the nonrefundable portion of the COVID-19 credit for qualified sick and family leave wages for leave taken before April 1, 2021, entered on line 8b?			
15. Is the nonrefundable portion of the credit for qualified sick and family leave wages for leave taken after March 31, 2021, and before October 1, 2021, entered on line 8d?			
16. Is the amount entered on 8g mathematically correct (the total of lines 8a, 8b, and 8d)?			

Item	Yes	No	N/A
17. Are total deposits for the year, including any overpayments applied from the previous year or from Forms 941-X or 944-X filed in the current calendar year, properly reported on line 10a?			
18. Is the refundable amount of COVID-19 credit for qualified sick and family leave wages for leave taken before April 1, 2021, entered on line 10d?			
19. Is the refundable amount of COVID-19 credits for qualified sick and family leave wages for leave taken after March 31, 2021, and before October 1, 2021, entered on line 10f?			
20. Is the amount entered on line 10h mathematically correct (the total of lines 10a, 10d, and 10f)?			
21. If line 9 is more than line 10h, is the difference entered on line 11? This is the balance due when the return is filed.			
22. If line 10h is more than line 9, is the appropriate box on line 12 marked to indicate whether the overpayment should be applied to the next return or refunded?			
23. If the net taxes shown on line 9 are \$2,500 or more:			
a. If the employer is a monthly depositor, are the monthly tax liabilities properly reported on line 13, and is the proper box on line 13 marked?			
b. Do the amounts entered on line 13 represent liabilities for taxes and withholdings rather than deposits of taxes and withholdings?			
c. Does the total of the amounts entered on line 13 equal the net tax liability reported on line 9?			
d. If the employer is a semiweekly depositor or accumulated a tax liability of \$100,000 or more on any day during a deposit period, is Form 945-A completed instead of boxes 13a–13m?			
24. If returns do not have to be filed in the future (i.e., because the employer ceases operations or stops paying wages):			
a. Is the box on line 14 checked to indicate that fact?			
b. Is the date final wages were paid entered in the space below line 14?			
c. Is a statement attached to the final return showing the name of the person keeping the payroll records and the address where those records will be kept?			
25. Are the qualified health plan expenses allocable to COVID-19 qualified sick leave wages for leave taken before April 1, 2021, paid during the year entered on line 15?			
26. Are the qualified health plan expenses allocable to COVID-19 qualified family leave wages for leave taken before April 1, 2021, paid during the year entered on line 16?			
27. Are the qualified sick leave wages for leave taken after March 31, 2021, and before October 1, 2021, paid during the year entered on line 19?			
28. Are the qualified health plan expenses allocable to qualified sick leave wages reported on line 19 paid during the year entered on line 20?			
29. Are the amounts under certain collectively bargained agreements allocable to qualified sick leave wages reported on line 19 paid during the year entered on line 21?			
30. Are the qualified family leave wages for leave taken after March 31, 2021, and before October 1, 2021, paid during the year entered on line 22?			

Item	Yes	No	N/A
31. Are the qualified health plan expenses allocable to qualified family leave wages reported on line 22 paid during the year entered on line 23?			
32. Are the amounts under certain collectively bargained agreements allocable to qualified family leave wages reported on line 22 paid during the year entered on line 24?			
Procedures to Be Performed before Filing the Return			
33. Have all questions on the return been answered?			
34. Has the third-party designee section in Part 4 of the form been completed?			
35. Is a paper form signed:			
a. For a sole proprietorship: by the individual owning the business?			
b. For a corporation (including an LLC treated as a corporation): by a president, a vice president, or other principal officer duly authorized to sign?			
c. For a partnership (including an LLC treated as a partnership) or other unincorporated organization: by a partner, member, or officer who is responsible, duly authorized, and has knowledge of the organization's affairs?			
d. For a single member LLC treated as a disregarded entity for federal income tax purposes: by the LLC owner or a principal officer duly authorized to sign?			
e. By an agent or employee for whom an acceptable Form 2848 (Power of Attorney and Declaration of Representative) has been filed?			
36. If applicable, has the return been signed by the paid preparer?			
a. Has the paid preparer entered their Preparer Tax Identification Number (PTIN)?			
37. If not filed electronically, is the return being sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, or by an IRS designated delivery service to the appropriate address (depending on whether a payment is included with the return) listed in the Form 944 instructions?			
38. If the net liability shown on line 9 is less than \$2,500, has the employer enclosed a check or money order made payable to the United States Treasury for the amount due?			
a. Has the employer included on the payment check or money order its EIN, "Form 944," and the tax period to which the payment applies?			
b. Is a completed Form 944-V included with the payment?			
c. Are the payment and the Form 944-V not stapled together?			
d. If not paying by check or money order, is payment made using EFTPS, credit or debit card, or electronic funds withdrawal, are proper IRS procedures being followed, and is Form 944-V not included?			
39. If the net liability shown on line 9 is \$2,500 or more, is the balance due shown on line 11 zero, and has the employer deposited all amounts due by electronic funds transfer?			
Note: All payroll tax deposits must be made electronically through EFTPS.			

Item	Yes	No	N/A
Reconciling Forms 944 with Forms W-2			
40. Have the amounts reported on Form 944 been reconciled with the totals on the Forms W-2 as reported on Form W-3?			
41. If there is a discrepancy caused by an acquisition, statutory merger, or consolidation, has Schedule D (Form 941) been filed with the Form 944?			