

**Chromebook – Technology FAQs 1-26-20**  
*AARP Foundation Tax-Aide National Technology and Security Committee*

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Questions from the NTSC calls, the TCS Webinars and the T-VOG and TCS Blog.

### Chromebooks

1. Why is Tax-Aide going to Chromebooks after years of PCs?

- After extensive research, Tax-Aide National decided that Chromebooks had better security, cost, and convenience than PCs.
- Tax-Aide National will manage and control the Operating System, configuration settings, and security updates on every Tax-Aide Chromebook to help protect AARP, Volunteers, Tax-Aide and Taxpayers by reducing the possibility of a security breach. These automatic operating system updates will be “pushed” over the Internet to all Tax-Aide Chromebooks saving over 50,000 hours that volunteers previously spent “re-imaging” PCs, which is good news for all.
- A Chromebook is about half of the cost of a Windows PC. Moving to a unified national fleet of Tax-Aide provided Chromebooks will also significantly reduce the repair rate and costs.
- Multiple users can create individual accounts that only they can access on a single shared Chromebook without requiring an administrator to set up an additional user. Each user’s information is independently, separately, and securely stored in the cloud on a unique Google Drive account that the user can access when logging on from any Tax-Aide Chromebook. Sites will be able to more easily and securely share Chromebooks with multiple counselors, reducing the total number of Chromebooks needed.
- Chromebooks have a 10-hour battery, which should provide more flexibility in sites where outlets or extension cords are not readily available. Volunteers (or Local Coordinators) will need to recharge the laptops off-site or during off-hours.

2. How is the Chromebook similar to (and different from) a Windows PC?

- Chromebooks will operate virtually identically to PCs where preparers use a browser to access TaxSlayer Online.
- The browser will be Google Chrome, functionally similar to Microsoft Internet Explorer, or Edge.
- Chromebooks will have some minor keyboard differences but there is a keyboard shortcuts document in the Blue Tax-Aide: Technology folder on the Portal in the “Chromebooks” section.

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- Chromebooks have a 15.6” screen display just like the newer PCs.
  - Chromebooks do not have numeric keypads like some of the newer Tax-Aide laptops, but any USB numeric keypads, mice, keyboards, and monitors that worked with Windows PC will work with Chromebooks.
  - The Chromebooks have four USB ports for connection to keypads, mice, keyboards, and monitors. Depending on the connector style, two ports may require adapters. Regional management will handle ordering and distributing peripherals and adapters as needed.
  - Like all current PCs, Chromebooks will NOT have a touchscreen.
  - Chromebooks are equipped with Bluetooth, which can wirelessly connect with some mice and numeric keypads (but USB-wired may be less expensive).
3. **How is the Chromebook Operating System updated?**  
The Chromebook has 2 copies of the Operating System (OS), one is active and the other allows updates to be loaded in the background without interfering with the active use (eliminating delays to download and install updates). The updated OS loads whenever the Chromebook is restarted, so users should be trained to use “Shut Down” rather than “Sign out” at the end of a session.
4. **Where can I find Chromebook training and setup information?**  
The Chromebooks folder in the Blue Tax-Aide: Technology Library folder on the Portal includes the latest versions of an Out-of-the-Box instructions document and video. The link to the excellent 'Chromebook Out-Of-The-Box' video is <https://youtu.be/hFJWdKvf84s> .
5. **How do I set the Chromebook Date and Time for my Time Zone.**  
Chromebooks are set by HQ to automatically set the Date and Time based on the local Internet Service Provider (ISP), so no action is needed. If the time zone is wrong, just be sure that the network is active and restart to allow the Chromebook to synch the date and time. (Note: users accustomed to setting their own date and time as part of their initial setup will find that the settings will revert to automatic on a restart.)
6. **How do we handle Chromebooks that are defective on delivery or missing a power supply?**  
Answer pending on whether to open a ticket or contact Connections directly. However, try the hard-reset in the next answer before reporting a Chromebook as defective.
7. **How do we handle Chromebooks that are not working properly out of the box or due to users’ actions?**  
Chromebooks can be hard-reset by holding the power button down for 30 seconds, which should restore normal operation.
8. **What USB adapters will we need?**  
The Chromebook has two USB 3.1 ports (same as the previous PCs that will work with the existing USB wired mice and keypads). The Chromebook also has two USB-C ports, one of which would be needed for the power cord if used. (The Chromebook has a long battery life which should make using a power cord unnecessary where inconvenient but that will require offsite/off-hour charging). Adapters are available (see Amazon or check with a local electronics store) for USB 3.1 or USB-C to HDMI (for an external monitor)

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or USB-C to USB 3.1 in case you need to connect additional USB 3.1 devices. Since the largest number of expected connected devices would be three (mouse, keypad or keyboard, and monitor, there should be one remaining USB-C port for a power cord as needed. LCs or TCs can acquire the adapters and external devices as needed, but must check with their State Coordinator to determine if Tax-Aide funding is available. Based on past experience, we would expect that the most common external devices would be a mouse and keypad or keyboard with a number pad. *[This information will be updated as further information on peripherals and adapters is developed, including reasonable prices and vendors.]*

9. Will Chromebook “Guest” login be disabled at the start of the TY19 tax season?  
Yes. Guest mode is intended to let new or inactive volunteers access the Practice Lab and references for training and certification before Volunteer IDs are issued or activated.
10. Can the Chromebook “Guest” login mode be updated to include bookmarks for Practice Lab Link & Learn training or references like the Volunteer Portal?  
Not this year. They have to be entered manually, but bookmarks entered into Chrome will reappear on each subsequent log-in by that user.
11. Can any volunteer with a Tax-Aide ID log into a Tax-Aide Chromebook?  
Any volunteer with an active Tax-Aide ID should be able to log into a Tax-Aide Chromebook.
12. What should we do if the “@aarpfoundation.org” is missing from the login screen?  
Try a normal reboot and if that is not effective try the hard-reset by holding the power button down for 30 seconds, which should reset the Chromebook.
13. Can Google Play Store and the Android WebView update notice (which load each time the Chromebook is started) be removed (to avoid potential bandwidth issues at low bandwidth sites with multiple volunteers logging on simultaneously)?  
Tax-Aide HQ has put in a ticket with Google to resolve this. Answer pending.
14. How can we change the display font size?  
Click on the time in the lower right corner, then the “settings” gear symbol; open Displays and at the bottom of the screen, slide the “Display Size” bar to the desired size, such as 130%. This setting will remain. (These instructions are included in the Out-of-the-Box video on the Portal.)
15. Can Tax-Aide Chromebooks be set to maximize the home screen (Chrome) display on log-in.  
No. That is apparently not a configurable feature on the Tax-Aide enterprise Chromebook operating system. You will have to maximize the display each time you log in.
16. Can we load TIA on the Chromebook?  
No, TIA is Windows-compatible only.
17. How can I get my custom bookmarks on our Chromebooks?  
Users can load their custom bookmarks (Regional, Split-state, District, site, personal) into Chrome on their Tax-Aide Chromebooks. The bookmarks will be stored into that user’s profile and will then appear for that user with each login regardless of what Tax-Aide Chromebook is used. Bookmarks can also be imported from another instance of

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Chrome using the “export Bookmarks” feature on the remote copy and “import Bookmarks” on the Tax-Aide Chromebook.

18. How can Google Drive bookmarks or documents be shared with a group, like a Split-state or a district?

Based on initial user input, the most convenient appears to be to create a shared folder on the trainer’s or TC’s Google Drive. Documents to be shared and the selected group can be selected. See

<https://support.google.com/drive/answer/7166529?co=GENIE.Platform%3DDesktop&hl=en> with access rather than using a flash drive for each user, or an attachment to an email opened on the Chromebook.)

19. What can be stored on a volunteer’s Google Drive?

A user’s Google Drive account will include his/her bookmarks, printer setup information, and personal reference documents. It may not be used to store any taxpayer information.

20. Will a volunteer’s Google Drive contents be erased by operating system updates?

No. The contents will remain intact through at least the end of the tax season.

21. How soon after delivery will Chromebooks be entered into OIS after shipment so that local sites can insert the assigned users information?

The vendor sends a daily shipping summary to National who then manually updates the OIS. It may take 2-3 business days after Chromebook delivery for the OIS updates to appear. Best to wait 5 business days after delivery before opening a ticket.

22. How do volunteers open their personal email accounts (associated with their Tax-Aide Volunteer profile) on a Tax-Aide Chromebook (needed for the “Forgot my password” feature)?

Open an “incognito window” in Chrome (using the 3 dot menu at the top right of the screen or Ctrl-Shift-N) and enter the URL for your email, such as “mail.google.com” for Gmail, which will take you to your email login screen. Leaders will need to instruct volunteers to look on their email websites to learn their remote log-in URLs.

23. Where can I find Chromebook keyboard shortcuts?

There is a keyboard shortcuts guide in the Chromebooks folder in the Tax-Aide: Technology Library (Blue folder) on the Portal, but the fastest way is to use “Ctrl-Alt-?” which opens a shortcuts list with a search window at the top.

24. What are the home network settings and requirements for using a Tax-Aide Chromebook (for clearing rejections, ERO review, e-filing, etc.), including using an ethernet cable to connect a Tax-Aide computer to a home router to avoid wireless security issues?

The home router security precautions are listed in Section 8.5.11 (Home Routers) on page 47 of the Policies and Procedures Manual 2019-2020 in the Tax-Aide: General Information Library on the Portal. A Tax-Aide computer can be securely connected either wirelessly or by ethernet cable to a home router that meets the listed security precautions. An ethernet cable avoids a wireless connection but will not be secure unless the router has been configured to meet the security precautions.

25. Can a user (or TC doing set-ups) log on to more than one Chromebook at a time?

Yes. Reports indicate that users have been able to log on to multiple Chromebooks simultaneously. No maximum number has been confirmed, but 8 is the highest reported.

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26. Can multiple users log into the same Google Drive account at once, such as for training?  
This would be a direct violation of the Tax-Aide guidelines (no sharing of accounts and passwords). Training users should be using the Guest account. They'll need to type/be provided with URLs to the appropriate sites (this would be a good use of the QR-scanning ability).
27. Should hotspots be configured for a common SSID and password like routers?  
Answer pending. Check "Networking" in the blue Tax-Aide:Technology library folder on the Volunteer Portal for updates.
28. Is Tax-Aide recommending that volunteers choose to save Chrome log-on passwords when prompted?  
The "Offer to save passwords" setting in Chrome is on by default on the Tax-Aide Chromebooks; saved user names and passwords will automatically load on a site's login screens in the future. . (It is convenient for entering the Volunteer Portal.)
29. Can National set the national Tax-Aide configuration to retain printer settings?  
Answer pending. After a Chromebook re-start, the printer setting, although saved in the user's profile, reverts to "Save as PDF" and duplex printing is off by default. Check "Printers" the blue Tax-Aide:Technology library folder on the Volunteer Portal for updates.
30. If we need special equipment (such as a monitor for a visually impaired volunteer) what funds do we use to pay for it?  
Regional funds.
31. How can I get back to the Chrome home page after I exit and re-enter Chrome (and the home page links are gone)?  
Click on the Chrome settings (3 vertical dots at the top right corner) and click "History" to let you reopen the previous tabs. In the "AARP Tax-Aide Links" on the top left, clicking on "Tax Slayer" (second from bottom) will reopen the home page links.

### Printers

32. When can we expect printers?  
Chromebook shipments are currently scheduled to be completed by the end of December and printers are scheduled to begin shipping in early January, but this will depend on both the Vendor's capabilities and possible holiday shipping backups. Latest information is that printer shipments are nearly complete.
33. Where can I find printer setup instructions?  
In "Printers" in the blue Tax-Aide: Technology Library folder on the Volunteer Portal.
34. Is duplexing (2-sided printing) available only on duplexing Chromebook-compatible printers?  
You should be able to set any printer to duplexing if it is capable.
35. Is the printer setup on the local machine or in the user profile?  
The printer setup is linked to the User Profile, not the individual Chromebook. Please refer to the P1 Chromebook Printer Installation Guide in "Printers" in the blue Tax-Aide: Technology Library folder on the Portal for basic printer installation instructions.

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36. Since printer profiles are in the user profile, must the TC install each user's profile to set up the site Chromebooks for the applicable printer or will users be expected to set up printers in their profiles for each site where they work?

Answer pending. Check "Printers" in the blue Tax-Aide: Technology Library folder on the Portal for updates.

37. What is being done about the HP P1102w printer compatibility problems (slow printing, etc.)?

National is replacing all HP P1102w Model CE 658A printers with Brother 2370DW printers. National and the RCs are coordinating the replacements.

### Distribution

38. Where can we get Chromebook delivery updates?

Check the "Distribution" folder in the Tax-Aide: Technology Library on the Portal.

39. How can I redirect a shipment to a secure FedEx pickup site if I may not be available for delivery?

The free "FedEx Delivery Manager" app reportedly allows you to redirect a FedEx shipment to a secure FedEx pickup facility or a local Walgreens. (Some users have reported that FedEx mails a verification code that can take up to 5 days.) While FedEx Delivery Manager is the recommended method, there have also been reports that redirections may not always be available, so you may need to contact your local FedEx office with your tracking number to try to redirect delivery.

40. Do we need to use the outer shipping box to return Windows laptops to the Chromebook vendor?

FedEx uses an outer box for security (to hide the fact that the contents are a laptop), but reports indicate that FedEx sites will take only the (inner) Acer Chromebook box with the return shipping label. The safest approach is to call the local FedEx office and ask. Note: Each Chromebook box includes a return label regardless of how many Chromebooks are packed in the outer box, so each Chromebook can be returned individually in the Acer box.

41. How do we order extra boxes to return replaced desktops and laptops if we are getting fewer Chromebooks than our Windows desktop/laptop inventory?

Open a ticket, indicating the number and types (desktop or laptop) boxes needed.

42. Does FedEx provide free laptop shipping boxes?

Call your local FedEx office. One caller was told that FedEx would sell them for about \$25.

43. Why can't the vendor ship printers with Chromebooks?

Due to the magnitude of the Chromebook shipments, the vendor did not have the capacity to ship printers as well and meet the necessary schedule, so National decided that getting all of the Chromebooks out first should be the priority to accommodate training needs.

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### Networking (and Routers)

44. [Is there a list of recommended routers and settings?](#)

Yes. In the Tax-Aide: Technology Library on the Portal is a document “H72 Router Selection Guide” (current version is dated 11-13-2019) which includes a list of recommended routers. There are also more detailed setup instructions in additional documents. Check “Networking” in the blue Tax-Aide: Technology Library folder on the Portal for updates.

45. [Should we add routers or hotspots to OIS?](#)

No. OIS is for computers and printers. Districts or regions generally keep their own records, of routers or hotspots. Yes, either an Ethernet connection using a cable or a wireless connection is acceptable for connection to an AARP router. Refer to the Printers folder on the Portal for comprehensive printer setup instructions

46. [Can I use a tablet instead of a cellphone as a hotspot?](#)

Yes, because tablets use the same cellular technology as a smartphone. However, be sure that the tablet is properly password protected as provided in “Networking” in the blue Tax-Aide: Technology Library folder on the Portal.

47. [Will a site printer work if connected via cable to the site router?](#)

Yes, either an Ethernet connection using a cable or a wireless connection is acceptable for connection to an AARP router at a site. Refer to “Printers” in the blue Tax-Aide: Technology Library folder on the Portal for comprehensive printer setup instructions and the most recent updates.

### Consumables

48. [Where can we find out what Chromebook-compatible printers we will be receiving in order to be able to pre-order consumables for the Tax Season?](#)

You can check with your Regional Coordinator to confirm what was ordered, but each new printer will be delivered with a toner cartridge that should provide time to order additional consumables.

### Volunteer Portal Library

49. [Where are the TCS webinar recordings?](#)

In the Tax-Aide: TCS/TC folder in the Portal Library. Waiting for confirmation of when the December recording will be posted.

50. [Why does the “back” arrow take you entirely out of the library and back to the home screen instead of just to the previous screen?](#)

This is how the Library is configured. However, pressing and holding the left mouse down over the back arrow (instead of clicking) will show you the history and you can move back to the Libraries screen instead of to the home screen. Also, if you are previewing a document, click on the X in the upper right-hand corner to take you back to the previous screen. The link to an excellent video on “How to navigate the Portal Library” video is <https://youtu.be/U7o2hH4IX0A>.

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51. Can we get a Portal Library table of contents so we know what documents and resources are available and where we can find them?

There is a table of contents for TY19Tech documents in a file in the blue Tax-Aide: Technology Library on the Portal. However, typing a search term in the Search bar at the top of the page will provide a list of applicable documents in any Library if available.

52. How can we know when a Portal document has been updated?

Volunteers can “follow” a document in a Portal Library by clicking on that document, then clicking on “View File Details” above the document, and selecting “Follow” in the top right section of the screen. Volunteers will receive emails advising when any document they are following is updated.