



**Conscience
Canada**

***Peace Tax Return
for the 2023 tax year***

- ▶ **Affirm your refusal to pay for war
and**
- ▶ **Withhold a symbolic part of your military taxes
or**
- ▶ **Withhold all of your military taxes**

**Attention: This is not an official Canada Revenue Agency form.
This form is produced by Conscience Canada.**

Personal information

Name	
Address	
City/Town/District	
Prov./Terr.	
Postal Code	
Telephone	
Email address	

NOTE: As your Social Insurance Number (SIN) is your Canada Revenue Agency account number, you may wish to add your SIN beneath your signature on the paper copy going to CRA.
DO NOT divulge your SIN to others.

Option A: Declaration of Conscience

- I am a conscientious objector to war and object to being forced to support war by the conscription of my taxes.
- In accordance with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms provision for freedom of conscience I request that none of my taxes be used for war.
- I support the creation of a government controlled Peace Fund for non-military peace-building purposes to which the military portion of my taxes can be diverted

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Option B: Declaration of Conscience and withholding of military taxes

- I am a conscientious objector to war and object to being forced to support war by the conscription of my taxes.
 - In accordance with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms provision for freedom of conscience I request that none of my taxes be used for war.
 - I support the creation of a government controlled Peace Fund for non-military peace-building purposes to which the military portion of my taxes can be diverted.
 - On the grounds of conscience, and pending the creation of a government controlled Peace Fund, I am herewith:
 - withholding **6.5 %**, the military portion of my net federal income tax for tax year 2023
- (or)**
- withholding a symbolic portion of the military share of my net federal tax: \$_____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

THE PEACE TAX RETURN EXPLAINED: A Declaration of Objection to Military Taxes

The preceding form is for those who object to contributing to military spending on grounds of conscience and wish to declare their objection to the Canadian government. Although this is not an official Income Tax and Benefit Return form, it is not an offense to use it, nor are we aware of any criminal charges against any of the 1,000+ Canadians who have expressed conscientious objection to military taxation since Conscience Canada began in 1978. For information on likely consequences, please see the FAQs on our website — www.consciencecanada.ca and look under the **Resources** tab.

Please be aware that by using this Peace Tax Return and sending a copy to Conscience Canada (CC) you will be regarded as a voting member of CC. You will receive our twice yearly newsletter and occasional e-mails from us to keep you informed of new peace initiatives and other CC news and ideas.

Instructions for Option A

Option A is for those who have no tax payable, have a refund coming, or do not wish to withhold their military taxes but still want to register their objection to paying for war.

- Sign and date your Option A declaration of objection to military taxation.
- Mail it to the Minister of Finance, House of Commons, Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6.
- Notify Conscience Canada by mail or email.

It will strengthen your message if you:

- Send a letter to the Minister of Finance along with your declaration, explaining why you wish to have your taxes supporting peace rather than killing. We offer a sample letter on page 4.
- Send copies of your letter to the Minister of Revenue, to all Party Leaders, your MP, and Conscience Canada. Contact information for MPs and cabinet ministers can be found at <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Members/en/search> or call 1-800-O-Canada (1-800-622-6232) for government contact information.

Instructions for Option B

Option B is for those who wish to withhold all or part of their military taxes and have tax owing.

- After completing your official Income Tax form down to Balance Owing (line 48500), go back to the Net Federal Tax (line 42000) and calculate **6.5 %** (this is DND expenditures in 2022-23 as a percentage of total government expenditures) of the amount you entered on this line. Deduct that amount (the 6.5 %) from your cheque or electronic payment to the Receiver General. If you have chosen to withhold a symbolic sum, deduct the symbolic amount you have chosen from the tax you owe.
- Write a letter to the Minister of Finance explaining why you wish to have your taxes supporting peace rather than killing. Modify the sample on the following page so that it speaks for you.
- After signing and dating the declaration in Option B, attach the following to your Income Tax and Benefit Return: the Peace Tax Return, and a copy of your letter to the Minister of Finance. Send to your Tax Centre or Tax Services Office.
- Send a copy of your Peace Tax Return along with your letter to the Minister of Finance. We also encourage you to send copies of your letter to all Party Leaders, your MP, and Conscience Canada. Contact information for MPs and cabinet ministers can be found at <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Members/en/search> or call 1-800-O-Canada (1-800-622-6232) for government contact information.

NOTE: Conscience Canada no longer maintains a Peace Tax Trust Fund where a taxpayer's withheld military taxes could be deposited for safekeeping. It is up to each individual withholding military tax to decide on how to handle their withheld money. You may wish to show support for full legal recognition of conscientious objection to military taxation by donating some or all of your withheld military taxes to a charitable group working to promote peace and justice.

SAMPLE LETTER TO THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

Minister of Finance
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Freeland,

Civil rights leader Bayard Rustin said, "If we desire a society of peace, then we cannot achieve such a society through violence." Albert Einstein opined "Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding." Bertrand Russel considered consequences "War does not determine who is right - only who is left." All of which leads to Arundhati Roy's quiet optimism "Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing."

For reasons such as these, I am a conscientious objector to engaging in war and militarism and to paying others to do that in my stead. I join with other conscientious objectors in doing what I can to ensure that none of my taxes will be used to buy and sell military weapons or to engage in war and militarism.

Historically, Canadian governments have respected the fundamental right to freedom of conscience more than many other governments have. Currently however our government is not a leader in this regard. This failure to fully respect our charter's commitment to respect freedom of conscience is, no doubt, related to the failure of successive Canadian governments to support non-violent peacebuilding around the globe.

Please introduce a legal conduit for conscientious objectors to fulfill their community responsibility to pay taxes – without betraying their conscience. In order to genuinely respect freedom of conscience we, as Canadians, need to act. We could, for instance, establish a Peace Tax Fund or create a Department of Peace.

Sincerely,

[Your name]
[Your address]

In your letter, you may also wish to address the history of conscientious objection in Canada, the destructive effects of war, the financial burden and lost opportunities relating to military spending, the impact of the military on climate change and the environment, non-violent alternatives to military force, and Canadian leadership in keeping peace. Visit our website consciencecanada.ca for more information.

If you have no tax to pay because it is deducted at source, you might want to add weight to your support for full recognition of conscientious objection by donating some or all of your tax refund to a group which works to promote peace and justice.

In being a conscientious objector to military taxation you are joined by many prominent Canadians. On May 12, 2009, Senator Nancy Ruth addressed the Senate of Canada, stating: "I am speaking in support of the re-introduction into parliament of the Conscientious Objection Act, which would give all Canadians the option of dedicating their taxes solely to peaceful purposes." As she had explained to senators on May 15, 2007, "I am one of those Canadians who, for some years, have withheld from my income tax payment the percentage for the military budget."

CONSCIENCE CANADA has worked since 1978 to increase Canadians' awareness of the connection between taxes and war, divert taxes away from war, support creative non-violent conflict prevention and resolution, and promote conscientious objection legislation.

For more information, contact: Conscience Canada
Box 200.
Van Anda, BC
V0N 3K0

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Web: <https://www.consciencecanada.com>