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IRS will delay April 15 deadline for many in Mass.

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Boston Globe Staff

Victims of severe storms and flooding in Massachusetts may qualify for tax relief from the Internal Revenue Service; relief comes in the form of some IRS deadlines being moved back to May 11, including the April 15 deadline for filing 2009 individual income tax returns.

President Obama has declared the Massachusetts counties of Bristol, Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk, and Worcester as federal disaster areas qualifying for individual assistance.

Taxpayers who reside or have a business in the disaster area qualify for the May 11 deadlines in many cases, the IRS said. The IRS said its computer systems automatically identify taxpayers located in the covered disaster area and apply automatic filing and payment relief.

Taxpayers in the disaster area who have not been severely impacted by the storm are encouraged to file by the traditional IRS deadlines. But taxpayers in these areas do not have to take any action to be eligible for the extended deadlines, an IRS spokeswoman said.

Taxpayers in the affected areas will not be penalized for missing the traditional April 15 so long as they file on or before May 11. Collection activities by the IRS will also be suspended during that period, the IRS said.