

# **“Fiscal Cliff” Legislation**

## **(American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 - HR 8)**

### **Course Description**

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On January 2, 2012, President Obama signed the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (ATRA) into law. Although ATRA raised income taxes for high-income individuals, it avoided tax rate increases for middle income taxpayers. ATRA also made many extensions of or modifications to existing law. In other instances, it reinstated many provisions for 2012 that were about to expire and extended them through 2013 and, in a few cases beyond.

This course is an overview providing reference to selected individual, energy business, retirement, and estate tax provisions enacted or indexed for inflation by ATRA. The resulting major tax changes carry special meaning to the tax practitioner and return preparer. The course is intended to be a resource for tax professionals and staff alike to gain easy access to the most important major changes enacted by ATRA.

**Completion Deadline & Exam:** This course, including the examination, must be completed within one year of the date of purchase. In addition, unless otherwise indicated, no correct or incorrect feedback for any exam question will be provided.

**Course Level:** Overview. This program is appropriate for professionals at all organizational levels.

**CPE Credits:** 3 (CPA, EA)

**Category:** Taxation

**Prerequisite:** None.

**Advanced Preparation:** None

### **Course Learning Objectives**

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#### **Lesson 1: Fiscal Cliff Legislation**

1. Recognize changes imposed by the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (ATRA) relating to individual income taxes by identifying modified tax rates, defining AMT phaseout limits, and showing how tax credits and deductions work, including education, adoption, and energy credits.

- 2.** Identify key ATRA business provisions, including bonus depreciation, expensing, the work opportunity credit, leasehold and restaurant property improvements, FICA and SECA taxes, and S corporation developments.
- 3.** List retirement plans stating how they were affected by ATRA, including contribution limits and phaseout limits. Recognize the implications of changes to estate, generation-skipping transfer, and gift taxes noting to various affected scenarios.