



Rhode Island Department of Revenue

Division of Taxation

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ADVISORY FOR TAX PROFESSIONALS
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Preparations under way for Rhode Island tax amnesty

Division provides highlights well in advance for tax professionals and tax preparers

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – Preparations at the Rhode Island Division of Taxation are under way for the Rhode Island tax amnesty which begins in December.

“The start of amnesty is still more than two months away, but we want to let tax professionals and taxpayers know that we are well along in our planning and in our preparations,” said Rhode Island Tax Administrator Neena S. Savage, who oversees the Division of Taxation, which is part of the Rhode Island Department of Revenue.

“With today’s Advisory, we are providing a summary of amnesty information – some highlights, at a glance – for those tax professionals and taxpayers who are eager for information well in advance. We are making steady progress in our preparations and we will be ready for the amnesty when it begins,” Savage said.

For example, the Division already has set up the official amnesty website, which will be a clearinghouse of information about the amnesty. The website address is: <http://www.taxamnesty.ri.gov/>.

Although the website remains under construction, the Division of Taxation wants to let tax professionals and taxpayers know that the website will serve as the central repository for official amnesty-related information: The Division plans to post information to the website in stages over time – including the amnesty application form when it is completed.

Account statements to be mailed

The Division plans to mail account statements to approximately 90,000 taxpayers, beginning in early November, letting them know of their account balance. The account statements also will let the taxpayers know how much it will cost them to pay off their balance. In addition, the mailing will include the official amnesty application form and a payment voucher.

Plans also call for a phone bank to answer calls about amnesty. The Division will announce the phone number and the hours of operation when the phone bank opens, closer to the start of amnesty. In addition, the Division has already begun planning an extensive advertising and marketing campaign for amnesty.

AMNESTY AT A GLANCE

- Division will start accepting applications on December 1, 2017
- Amnesty will run for 75 days
- Amnesty applies to all Rhode Island state taxes
- Amnesty applies to any taxable period ending on or before December 31, 2016.
- If you pay the tax you owe, the Division will waive penalties and reduce the interest by 25 percent
- The Division is in process of developing an application form, website, and phone bank
- Extensive advertising and marketing campaign is planned
- Amnesty will end on February 15, 2018

Other points to keep in mind

Following are a few additional points to keep in mind regarding amnesty:

- By law, amnesty begins on December 2, 2017. But that's a Saturday. So, to avoid confusion and for convenience, the Division plans to begin accepting amnesty applications on Friday, December 1, 2017.
- Amnesty shall apply to all Rhode Island state taxes and fees administered by the Rhode Island Division of Taxation/Tax Administrator. Thus, no federal or local taxes or fees are eligible.
- The amnesty is for any taxable periods which ended on or before December 31, 2016. Thus, the amnesty will not apply to tax periods ended or ending in 2017 or later.
- If you pay the tax you owe, the Division will waive penalties and reduce the interest by 25 percent. For example, during 2016, a rate of 18 percent applied to underpayments. However, if you qualify for amnesty under this example, your interest rate for that period would be reduced by 4.5 percentage points, to 13.5 percent. In addition, the Division will not seek civil or criminal prosecution for the taxable period for which amnesty has been granted, nor will the Division block the renewal of your driver's license, professional license, or motor vehicle registration for that period. "In addition, by taking advantage of amnesty, you will get a clean slate, a fresh start, and rest easy," Savage said.
- Although the Division plans to mail notices to about 90,000 taxpayers who have a balance due, the Division will also extend amnesty to those whose Rhode Island tax delinquencies are not known to the agency. For example, someone who has never filed a Rhode Island return, but who should have filed, may be eligible for the amnesty. That person should contact the agency either shortly before amnesty begins or during the amnesty period. That person should also keep in mind that amnesty applies only for any taxable periods which ended on or before December 31, 2016.
- The 75-day amnesty period runs through Thursday, February 15, 2018. All amnesty applications and payments must be made or postmarked on or before 11:59 p.m. on February 15, 2018.
- Remember: Additional information about amnesty will be posted to the amnesty website.

The Rhode Island Division of Taxation office is located at One Capitol Hill in Providence, R.I., diagonally across from the Smith Street entrance to the State House, and is open to the public from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. business days. For more information, contact the Division of Taxation at (401) 574-8829. This Advisory is an informal, plain-language summary of recently enacted legislation and is for general information purposes only. It is not a substitute for Rhode Island General Laws, or for Rhode Island Division of Taxation regulations, rulings, or notices.
