



Rhode Island Department of Revenue

Division of Taxation

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TAX ADMINISTRATION

ADVISORY FOR TAX PROFESSIONALS
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Filing season opens in Rhode Island

Division of Taxation starts processing e-filed and paper returns for TY 2018

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – The Rhode Island Division of Taxation has officially begun accepting and processing electronically filed Rhode Island resident and nonresident personal income tax returns for the 2018 tax year.

The agency has also officially begun accepting and processing paper returns, but urges tax preparers and taxpayers to e-file. E-filing is faster, results in fewer errors, and provides the filer with an electronic filing acknowledgement.

In addition, e-filing is the only method available for having your personal income tax refund deposited directly into your bank or credit union account. (Direct deposit is not available for paper returns.)

Rhode Island Division of Taxation electronic filing	
<i>The Division of Taxation will accept the following returns electronically this season:</i>	
Form RI-1040	Resident personal income tax return
Form RI-1040NR	Nonresident personal income tax return
Form RI-1120C	Business corporation tax return – C corporations
Form RI-1120S	Business corporation tax return – S corporations
Form RI-1065	For partnerships, LLPs, LPs, LLCs, single-member LLCs
Preparers should check with their tax-preparation software provider to see if their programs are updated and ready for e-file. To view a summary, click here .	

CHANGES FOR FILING SEASON

As preparers and taxpayers start their filing season, they will encounter a number of changes, including the following:

- A new schedule – Schedule E (“Exemption Schedule”) – must be completed and filed with the return. On Schedule E, check a box for you, check another box for your spouse (if you’re married), and list the required information for all individuals you can claim as a dependent. The completed Schedule E is used to help compute the overall number of exemptions on page 1 of your Form RI-1040 (whether it’s a resident or nonresident return).
- An inflation adjustment performed by the Division by statute means that more taxpayers will be eligible for the tax break for income from 401(k) plans, pensions, annuities, and some other sources.

- An inflation adjustment performed by the Division by statute means that more taxpayers will be eligible for the tax break for income from Social Security benefits.
- An increase in the statewide property-tax relief credit (Form RI-1040H).
- A filing deadline of April 15, 2019.

The Division expects to receive and process more than 650,000 resident and nonresident personal income tax returns this year.

BUSINESS FILERS

The Division of Taxation has also officially begun accepting and processing electronically filed business returns on Form RI-1065, Form RI-1120C, and Form RI-1120S.

In addition, the Division has officially begun accepting paper-filed business returns. The Division reminds business filers of the change in original and extended due dates which first applied in the 2017 filing season. For example, calendar-year C corporations that formerly filed in March now file in April. Calendar-year partnerships that formerly filed in April now file in March.

FIGHTING TAX FRAUD

The Internal Revenue Service, state tax agencies, and the tax professional industry have joined forces to form the Security Summit, working in partnership to combat tax refund fraud, fraudulent tax returns, and identity theft-related fraud.



The Security Summit is working with tax preparation software providers and others to fight fraud. Enhanced security measures, in place to protect taxpayers' personal information and to combat fraud, have in some cases increased the time it takes many states to process and issue refunds, especially if back-up documentation is called for to support certain items of income or expense.

The Rhode Island Division of Taxation asks your patience as Rhode Island and many other states implement enhanced efforts to safeguard taxpayer dollars, combat tax refund fraud, and protect your personal information.

The Division this filing season will take the time necessary to review and verify the information on all tax returns to make sure that the right refund goes to the right person.

Tax preparers and taxpayers can help in the fight against fraud by filing electronically and using direct deposit, which is the most secure and effective way to receive a refund.

Some federal refunds delayed

The IRS, by law, cannot issue federal refunds before mid-February for returns that claim the earned income credit or the additional child tax credit.

The delay gives the IRS additional time to help prevent revenue lost due to identity theft and refund fraud related to fabricated wages and withholdings.

Last year, the Division issued more than 490,000 refunds totaling approximately \$309 million in the aggregate – an average of \$630 per refund (for tax year 2017 returns).

Rhode Island Division of Taxation refunds			
<i>The Division of Taxation issued more refunds last year than in the previous year*</i>			
	2017 calendar year*	2018 calendar year*	
Number of refunds	482,735	491,475	+1.8%
Total refund amount \$	\$ 288,001,210	\$ 309,533,913	+7.5%
Average refund \$	\$ 597	\$ 630	+5.6%

* Total refunds (including interest and after offsets) shown are only for tax year 2016 returns filed in calendar year 2017, and only for tax year 2017 returns filed in calendar year 2018. Some numbers are rounded.

FILING TIPS FOR ALL RETURNS

The Division urges taxpayers to gather and organize their financial records for 2018 to assist in the preparation of complete and accurate returns. Those claiming certain tax credits should be prepared to provide supporting documentation:

- Because the earned income credit is intended for those who have earned income (and who meet certain other requirements), those claiming the credit need to have *bona fide* documentation showing the source(s) of their earned income, such as Form W-2 wage statements.
- Because the statewide property-tax relief credit (Form RI-1040H) is generally intended for those who own or rent local property (and who meet certain other requirements), those claiming the credit need to have *bona fide* documentation showing that they paid local property tax, or paid rent to a landlord that paid local property tax.
- According to the Tax Preparers Act of 2013, preparers must exercise due diligence when preparing Rhode Island personal income tax returns involving the earned income credit and property-tax relief credit.¹
- To facilitate accurate processing of the return (and any related refund), be consistent from year to year with the names on the return. For example, if the taxpayer’s first name is Michael, don’t use “Michael” one year on the return, and “Mike” on the next year’s return – use “Michael” both years.

The Division of Taxation urges taxpayers and preparers to make sure that a Rhode Island personal income tax return includes a properly and accurately completed Schedule W – if the taxpayer had Rhode Island personal income tax withheld last year from a paycheck, a pension, or other such source of income.

The Division also urges filers to remember to include their Social Security number (or ITIN). If a filer is married, the filer should include the Social Security number (or ITIN) of the spouse, too.

¹ The Act is codified at Rhode Island General Laws § 44-68-1 *et seq.*, and describes duties, responsibilities, and penalties that apply to preparers. The Act also says that paid preparers must sign – and include their IRS-issued preparer tax identification number (PTIN) – on all returns prepared and filed with the Division of Taxation.

Also, don't forget to complete and include the new Schedule E with your return. Schedule E is required whether you are single or married, resident or nonresident. Also, Schedule E is required even if you have no dependents.

When making a payment, taxpayers should be sure to include a payment voucher. For those using tax software, vouchers can be printed out along with a copy of the return. Vouchers are also [on the Division website](#).

FILING TIPS FOR PAPER RETURNS

For those who file paper returns, the Division urges the use of tax preparation software so that the resulting return can be filed with a two-dimensional barcode. Paper returns with 2-D barcodes typically process more effectively and efficiently and result in fewer errors.

For those without tax preparation software, forms for the new filing season, covering tax year 2018, are now available [on the Division's website](#). Among the forms now available for download is Form RI-1040H, involving the statewide property-tax relief credit.

Following are some tips for paper filers:

- Avoid using staples when preparing paper returns for mailing because staples delay processing. Instead of using staples or sticky tape to bind tax return documents together prior to mailing, use binder clips, paper clips, or rubber bands – all of which can be quickly removed by Division staff during the processing of the return.
- Sign and date your return.
- Include with your return any Form W-2 wage statements.
- If you had any Rhode Island income tax withheld last year (from a job, a pension, or other source of income), don't forget to accurately complete your return's Schedule W and include it in your mailing.
- Remember to include a completed Schedule E with your return.
- Include all pages of the return.
- Use a standard-size envelope.
- Keep folding of the return to a minimum, to ease in processing.
- Include with the return only the required documents as shown in the instructions. (For example, do not include birth certificates.)
- Check the correct box for your "filing status."

Where's my refund?

Beginning in February, the Rhode Island Division of Taxation will regularly update its online "Where's My Refund?" tool: <https://www.ri.gov/taxation/refund/>

The tool is a handy way to find out the status of your Rhode Island personal income tax refund.

CONTACTING THE DIVISION OF TAXATION

There are a number of convenient ways to directly reach the Division regarding your Rhode Island personal income tax return or refund. Email the Division using the following address: Tax.Assist@tax.ri.gov.

You may also call the Division at (401) 574-8829 (choose option # 3), or visit the Division's office on the first floor of the Powers Building, at One Capitol Hill, diagonally across from the Smith Street entrance of the State House.

The Division is typically open to the public from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. business days. However, keep in mind that the number of visits and phone calls increases during filing season. For a complete listing of contact information for the Division of Taxation, [use the "Contact Us" section of the website.](#)

FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS

Many Rhode Island tax forms, instructions, and related schedules and other materials for individuals, businesses, and others are now available [online at the Division of Taxation website.](#) To order forms by mail, call (401) 574-8970, or email: tax.forms@tax.ri.gov.

FINDING A TAX PREPARER

Although the Rhode Island Division of Taxation does not prepare tax returns for 2018 on a walk-in basis, many certified public accountants, enrolled agents, public accountants, and other preparers are available throughout the state.

The [Internal Revenue Service website includes information on choosing a tax professional](#), as well as a public directory of certain tax professionals to help taxpayers determine return preparer credentials and qualifications. The directory is a searchable, sortable database with the name, city, state, and ZIP code of credentialed return preparers.



FREE TAX ASSISTANCE

Many locations in Rhode Island will prepare personal income tax returns -- and property-tax relief claims on Form RI-1040H -- all at no charge for eligible taxpayers. To find a volunteer tax preparation site near you -- including its location, hours, and dates of operation:

- Call the United Way of Rhode Island's helpline at 211.
- Call the VITA program toll-free at 1-800-906-9887.
- Call the AARP Tax-Aide program toll-free at 1-888-227-7669.

For more information, see [the IRS website](#), which includes links for finding nearby volunteer tax preparation sites. (For federal income tax information or assistance directly from the IRS, see the [IRS website](#) or call 1-800-829-1040.)

FREE FILE

You may qualify to prepare and file your federal and Rhode Island resident personal income tax returns online at no charge. The free service is made possible from [Free File](#), which is a partnership between the Internal Revenue Service, the Rhode Island Division of Taxation, a number of other states, and the Free File Alliance.

Home > Federal / State Online Filing

Free File - Rhode Island

General Information

You may qualify to prepare and file your federal and Rhode Island resident personal income tax returns online at no charge.

The Free File Alliance is a group of industry-leading private-sector tax preparation companies that have agreed to provide free commercial online tax preparation and electronic filing. The Division of Taxation website includes a listing of Free File offerings. To view, click [here](#).

The offerings include links to the Free File partners' websites. Please read the information on those web sites carefully before you begin the filing process. (If you do not meet the qualifications for Free File, you may be charged a fee for filing your taxes electronically.)

FILING DEADLINE: MONDAY, APRIL 15, 2019

The normal April 15 filing deadline will fall on a Monday this year. On April 16, Emancipation Day will be observed by Washington, D.C., and by the IRS.

Thus, the federal and Rhode Island filing deadline this year is Monday, April 15, 2019; Emancipation Day is not a factor this year for federal and Rhode Island returns filed for Rhode Islanders. All resident and nonresident Rhode Island personal income tax returns and related payments for tax year 2018 must be e-filed or postmarked on or before 11:59 p.m. on April 15, 2019. (Six-month extensions are allowed, but they are extensions of the time to file, not of the time to pay.)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
April 14, 2019 Closed	April 15, 2019 Filing deadline	April 16, 2019 Emancipation Day observed

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 or see <http://www.tax.ri.gov/contact>
