



Rhode Island Department of Revenue

Division of Taxation

ADV 2020-20
TAX ADMINISTRATION

ADVISORY FOR TAX PROFESSIONALS
MAY 15, 2020

Owed a refund? File soon to avoid deadline crunch

The sooner taxpayers file, the sooner they may receive their refund

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – Taxpayers who have yet to file a Rhode Island personal income tax return for 2019 and who are due a refund should keep in mind that the sooner they file, the sooner they may receive their refund.

Normally, the due date for filing is April 15. This year, however, the deadline for filing Rhode Island resident and nonresident personal income tax returns (covering the 2019 tax year) has been postponed to July 15 due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The sooner a return is filed, the sooner the Division can review and process the return and issue a refund (assuming that the taxpayer is due a refund and files a complete and accurate return).

“By filing now, you’ll get your income tax refund sooner while avoiding a crunch at the deadline,” said Rhode Island Tax Administrator Neena Savage.

Electronic filing

Taxpayers are also urged to file their returns electronically. Using electronic software is easy, convenient, and secure. E-filers can be assured that they are using the most up-to-date forms and instructions.

Furthermore, e-filers have the option to have their refunds deposited directly into their bank or credit union account. (Direct deposit is not an option for paper filers.)

Of all the Rhode Island personal income tax returns that have been filed so far this season, 92% have been e-filed.

The Rhode Island Division of Taxation encourages tax preparers and taxpayers who are in a position to do so to file soon – before the new July 15 deadline.

For those who are due a refund (and who file a complete and accurate return), the sooner the filing, the sooner the refund can be issued.

Taxpayers whose returns shown a balance due also should file earlier than the July 15 deadline to do their part in helping to ensure that the State of Rhode Island continues to have the financial resources it needs to fund critical services to deal with the coronavirus pandemic.

The latest statistics from the Division of Taxation are in the following table. (When viewing the table, it is important to note that last filing season, taxpayers were aware that the tax deadline was April 15. This season, taxpayers are aware that the tax deadline has been postponed by three months, to July 15. In other words, this year, taxpayers have three more months to prepare and file their returns.)

Rhode Island personal income tax statistics – refunds and returns – year-to-date comparison*	
Number of refunds issued last season:	Number of refunds issued this season:
426,841	389,208
Year-to-date refund dollars issued last season:	Year-to-date refund dollars issued this season:
\$251,334,525.30	\$250,004,680.36
Year-to-date returns processed last season:	Year-to-date returns processed this season:
612,632	508,500
* Year-to-date statistics as of May 11 for Rhode Island resident and nonresident personal income tax returns. Taxpayers have three extra months this season to prepare and file their returns.	

Tax preparation

Those who need help preparing their returns should keep in mind that many tax professionals are available throughout the region who prepare and e-file returns. For information on how to choose a tax preparer, click [here](#). For do-it-yourself taxpayers, forms and instructions are available by clicking [here](#). Or choose from among the various commercial tax-preparation software programs available in stores or online.

For information on volunteer tax preparers, click [here](#). Many volunteer tax-preparation sites closed in March to limit the spread of the coronavirus, but some continue to operate. (Click [here](#) for details.)

Also, many taxpayers are eligible to prepare and electronically file their federal and Rhode Island personal income tax returns at no charge by using the Rhode Island Free File program, available on the Rhode Island Division of Taxation website. For more information, click [here](#).



Tax payments

For taxpayers whose returns show a balance due, keep in mind that many of the taxes and fees administered by the Division can be paid online:

- To use the Division's portal: <https://taxportal.ri.gov/>
- To use the Division's "Business Tax Filings" site: <https://www.ri.gov/taxation/business/index.php>
- To pay by credit card or debit card: <http://www.tax.ri.gov/misc/creditcard.php>

Refund status

Taxpayers can check the status of a refund by using the "[Where's my tax refund?](#)" interactive tool on the Rhode Island Division of Taxation's website.

Enter the required information as shown on the screen -- including Social Security number, filing status ("married" or "single", for example), and the amount of the expected refund.



Assuming that all data has been correctly entered, the tool should offer a prompt response. The tool is updated nearly every business day during filing season. What if the refund is not available? The online tool has a number of separate messages to give taxpayers and tax preparers a better idea of any issue that may be delaying the processing of the return and any associated refund.

Other matters

- The Division has continued to operate throughout the pandemic. However, to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus, the Division strongly encourages taxpayers, tax preparers, and others to use its website, phone system, email system, and portal, rather than visit the office. Virtually all services the Division provides are available via the agency's website, phone system email system, and portal. After checking the Division's "Where's my refund?" online tool, taxpayers who still need to contact the Division about their refunds should email: Tax.Assist@tax.ri.gov or phone (401) 574-8829, option #3. For a more detailed list of email and phone contacts: <http://www.tax.ri.gov/contact/>.
- To keep up with the latest information about Rhode Island state taxes amid the pandemic, see the Division's special COVID-19 webpage: <http://www.tax.ri.gov/COVID/>.

The Rhode Island Division of Taxation, part of the Rhode Island Department of Revenue, has normal operating hours 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>
