



Rhode Island Department of Revenue

Division of Taxation

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ADVISORY FOR TAX PROFESSIONALS
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E-filing urged on tax-filing deadline

Tax preparers and taxpayers should continue filing despite IRS outage

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – The Rhode Island Division of Taxation urges tax professionals and taxpayers to continue filing their returns as they ordinarily would. Referring to today's outage at the Internal Revenue Service, Rhode Island Tax Administrator Neena Savage said, "This is a technical issue that should not affect the validity of your tax filing. We strongly recommend that tax professionals and taxpayers continue to electronically file their returns, and file on or before tonight's deadline."

A computer system outage at the IRS halted the transmission to the IRS of electronically filed federal income tax returns. It also halted the transmission to the IRS of electronically filed state income tax returns for most states across the country, including Rhode Island. That is because most states, including Rhode Island, take part in the joint federal/state e-filing cooperative. (Under that system, your state return accompanies your federal return when you use electronic filing software.)

Nevertheless, tax professionals and taxpayers should continue to e-file their returns, Savage said. E-filing typically results in faster processing, fewer errors, and the issuing of refunds more quickly, she said. "Taxpayers should keep in mind that e-filed returns are typically transmitted first to the tax software provider, which then transmits them to the IRS," Savage said. "So even though there is an outage at the IRS, tax professionals and taxpayers should continue to e-file. The returns will be transmitted to the tax software companies in the ordinary course of business, which will transmit them to the IRS once the IRS computers are up and running again."

In the meantime, tax professionals and taxpayers will continue to receive electronic receipts -- also known as acknowledgements, or "acks" -- from their tax software companies. If a return is e-filed, and the tax professional or taxpayer receives an electronic acknowledgement from the tax software company today or tonight (April 17), the Rhode Island Division of Taxation will treat it as having been filed on time, Savage said. (This season's filing deadline is April 17, 2018.)

"The IRS is working to fix the outage. The Rhode Island Division of Taxation will not penalize taxpayers because of the IRS's technical issue," assuming that the taxpayer files a complete and accurate return in a timely fashion, Savage said. Tax preparers and taxpayers can check the status of their Rhode Island returns with their tax-filing software providers.

The Rhode Island Division of Taxation office is at One Capitol Hill in Providence, R.I., diagonally across from the Smith Street entrance of the State House, and is open to the public 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. business days. To learn more, see the agency's website: www.tax.ri.gov.