



Rhode Island Department of Revenue

Division of Taxation

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TAX ADMINISTRATION

ADVISORY FOR TAX PROFESSIONALS
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Division provides update on refunds amid coronavirus pandemic

Refunds continue to be issued on schedule; refund status tool available

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – The Rhode Island Division of Taxation continues to issue state tax refunds on schedule, despite the coronavirus pandemic and the resulting decline in revenues that is affecting many states across the country.

The decline in revenue “in no way impairs our ability” to issue Rhode Island state tax refunds, Rhode Island Governor Gina M. Raimondo said on April 27 during her daily COVID-19 news conference.

The latest statistics from the Division of Taxation are in the following 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:
415,005	368,020
Year-to-date refund dollars issued last season:	Year-to-date refund dollars issued this season:
\$242,914,883.16	\$235,013,413.48
Year-to-date returns processed last season:	Year-to-date returns processed this season:
601,561	488,792
* Year-to-date statistics as of April 27 for Rhode Island resident and nonresident personal income tax returns. Taxpayers have three extra months this season to prepare and file their returns. E-filed returns represent approximately 92.2% of all returns filed this season. Last season, e-filed returns represented approximately 90.5% of all returns filed.	

- The Division regularly updates its “Where’s my tax refund?” online tool to provide taxpayers with the status of their refunds. The tool is available through the following link: <https://www.ri.gov/taxation/refund/>.

- Keep in mind that refunds are issued to taxpayers who are owed a refund and who have filed a complete and accurate return. If there are issues with a return, such as missing information, the Division will typically provide a message to the taxpayer through the online tool.
- The Division strongly encourages taxpayers and tax preparers to file electronically, rather than on paper. E-filing saves time, results in fewer errors, and generates a refund more quickly (assuming that the taxpayer is owed a refund and has filed a complete and accurate return).
- On average, it takes five to eight business days for the Division to process a Rhode Island personal income tax return and issue any associated refund (assuming that the taxpayer is owed a refund and has filed a complete and accurate return). However, the entire procedure can take two to three weeks overall when time for mailing and delivery is taken into account. In general, e-filed returns are processed more quickly than paper returns. Also, in general, refunds related to e-filed returns are issued more quickly than refunds related to paper returns.
- The number of days listed above refers to the time the Division receives an e-filed or paper return to the time the Division approves the issuance of the refund. Only taxpayers who e-file returns have the option to have refunds deposited directly into their bank or credit union account. Direct deposit is not an option for paper returns. Taxpayers who e-file and choose direct deposit typically receive their refunds more quickly than those who choose to receive a refund check in the mail. Delivery times for paper checks vary and are outside the Division's control.
- The Division is a partner, with the Internal Revenue Service, state tax agencies, and others, in the Security Summit. Security Summit partners work together to combat identity theft and fight other scams to protect the nation's taxpayers. The Division uses multiple screens and other tools to detect and prevent refund fraud and related identity theft. A return that is flagged due to potential fraud can take longer to process.
- 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>
