

Help stop the spread: Use self-screening process before visiting *Taxpayers and Division staff working together to limit spread of coronavirus*


PROVIDENCE, R.I. – The Rhode Island Division of Taxation reminds taxpayers, tax professionals, vendors, and others to use Rhode Island’s self-screening tool prior to visiting the Division’s office in order to limit the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19).

“We continue to encourage taxpayers to use our email system, telephone system, portal, website, and various other online services to communicate with the Division,” said Rhode Island Tax Administrator Neena Savage, who oversees the Division of Taxation. “This is in keeping with the State of Rhode Island’s continuing effort to limit the spread of the coronavirus.”

Virtually all services the Division provides are available via the agency’s phone system, website, email system, and portal, she said.

But if you must visit, use the State of Rhode Island’s self-screening tool ahead of time. The COVID-19 self-screening application is a critical tool to ensure a safe and healthy environment for everyone who enters a State facility. Before visiting the Division’s office, use the following steps:

- **Step one:** If you are unfamiliar with the online self-screening tool, please read the handy user’s guide: <https://go.usa.gov/xf8Ad>
- **Step two:** Go to the tool’s website, enter the required information, and answer the required questions: <https://selfscreening.ri.gov/>
- **Step three:** If you selected “no” to all of the symptoms and questions, you will receive a green approval screen to enter the building (see partial screenshot on this page). If you selected “yes” to one or more of the symptom/screening questions, you will be denied access to the building.

 **ENTRY ALLOWED!** If you are a State employee, please be prepared to show the electronic approval to your designated floor or division captain in order to receive a sticker. If you are a vendor or visitor, please be prepared to show the electronic approval to security upon entry.

Result Date/Time

07/22/2020 04:34 PM EST

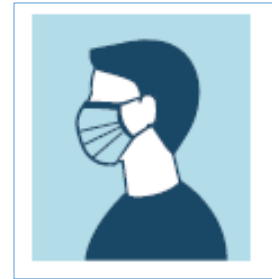
Approval active until 07/22/2020 11:59 PM EST

Mask mandate; social distancing

If you must visit the Division, and successfully complete the self-screening application and receive a green approval, you may enter the Division's office. However, you must still wear a mask and maintain social distancing.

Wear a cloth face covering when entering and exiting the Powers Building (where the Division is located), and in all common areas, unless:

- You are exempt for physical health or mental health reasons;
- You are developmentally unable to effectively wear a mask;
- Wearing a mask would directly inhibit an activity of daily living, such as eating;
- Wearing a mask would negatively impact your safety (e.g., near open flames); or
- You can safely and consistently maintain six feet distance in an indoor or outdoor setting.



Individuals must wear a cloth face covering when at an entrance, exit, or common area of the Powers Building, including check-in, registration, reception, waiting areas, hallways, corridors, bathrooms, elevators, and stairways.

Entry may be denied

Remember: A State office can deny entry to members of the public who refuse to wear a face covering and who do not meet one of the exemptions listed above. Members of the public who attempt to enter a State office for services and do not have a mask will be questioned by security personnel or staff as to whether they meet one of the exemptions.

If they do not meet one of the exemptions and are seeking services, a reasonable accommodation, such as providing disposable masks at high-traffic offices, will be made. If the person refuses and does not meet any of the exemptions, that person will be asked to leave.

In addition, all individuals in public or in an establishment are required to maintain physical distancing at all times, to the extent feasible. (When physical distancing is not feasible, individuals should minimize the time of exposure to the extent possible.)



Also keep in mind that Division of Taxation employees are following strict State protocols as part of the State's effort to limit the spread of the coronavirus.

"We all have a role to play in working to keep this virus at bay, and we appreciate the patience and cooperation of our stakeholders as we all work together on this," Savage said.

For more information, the Division recommends that taxpayers, tax professionals, and others review the executive order issued by Rhode Island Governor Gina M. Raimondo and a regulation issued by the Rhode Island Department of Health amid the pandemic.¹ Also:

- Read the “Reopening RI” COVID-19 screening tool: <https://tinyurl.com/y2o6sdkj>
- See the “Reopening RI” website for more information: <https://reopeningri.com/>
- See the Rhode Island Department of Health website: <https://health.ri.gov/covid/>

Division remains open

Although the Division’s office is open during its normal business hours, the Division still encourages taxpayers, tax professionals, and others to avoid visiting the office due to the pandemic. Instead, use email and phones to contact the agency. Also use the Division’s website and portal.

Forms, instructions, notices, rulings, and other publications are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, from the Division’s website: www.tax.ri.gov. A more detailed listing of the Division’s most frequently used phone numbers, email addresses, and web addresses appears elsewhere in this Advisory. Keep in mind that payments may be made electronically, and returns may be filed electronically. In addition, the Division continues to issue tax refunds, and still accepts paper filings and payments by check via the United States Postal Service and via private delivery service.

Refunds increase

The total amount of refunds issued by the Division so far this year is approximately \$313 million, compared with approximately \$286 million at the same point last year, an increase of 9.4%.

The Division has issued more than 479,000 personal income tax refunds so far this year, compared with approximately 463,000 at the same point last year, an increase of 3.5%.

The average refund amount so far this year is approximately \$654, compared with approximately \$619 at the same point last year, an increase of 5.7%. (For the exact numbers, please see table below.)

Rhode Island Division of Taxation refunds at a glance*		
AMOUNT OF REFUNDS TY 2018	AMOUNT OF REFUNDS TY 2019	DIFFERENCE
\$286,729,795.99	\$313,551,140.01	+9.4%
NUMBER OF REFUNDS TY 2018	NUMBER OF REFUNDS TY 2019	DIFFERENCE
463,476	479,680	+3.5%
AVERAGE REFUND TY 2018	AVERAGE REFUND TY 2019	DIFFERENCE
\$618.65	\$653.67	+5.7%
<small>* TY means tax year. Table shows data for Rhode Island personal income tax refunds. Some amounts are rounded. Tax year 2018 data as of August 3, 2019. Tax year 2019 data as of August 3, 2020.</small>		

¹ [Executive Order 20-41](#), which was renewed by [Executive Order 20-60](#), and [Regulation 216-RICR-50-15-7](#), “Safe Activities By Covered Entities During the COVID-19 Emergency”.

E-filing is up

The Division urges tax professionals and taxpayers to file returns electronically. E-filing is quick, results in fewer errors, and gives taxpayers the option to have their refunds deposited directly into their bank or credit union accounts. (Direct deposit is not an option for paper-filed returns.)

So far this year, the Division has processed more Rhode Island personal income tax returns overall. In addition, the number of e-filed returns is up, while the number of paper returns is down. In total, 90.53% of all Rhode Island personal income tax returns filed so far this year have been e-filed, compared with 88.98% at the same point last year.

Rhode Island Division of Taxation returns at a glance*		
E-FILED RETURNS, TY 2018	E-FILED RETURNS, TY 2019	DIFFERENCE
559,558	576,568	+3.0%
PAPER RETURNS, TY 2018	PAPER RETURNS, TY 2019	DIFFERENCE
69,280	60,338	-12.9%
TOTAL RETURNS, TY 2018	TOTAL RETURNS, TY 2019	DIFFERENCE
628,838	636,906	+1.3%
* TY means tax year. Tax year 2018 data as of August 3, 2019. Tax year 2019 data as of August 3, 2020. Some amounts are rounded. "E-filed" means electronically filed returns.		

Reminder

The Rhode Island Division of Taxation is working with other State agencies to limit the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19).

To that end, the Division strongly recommends that taxpayers, tax professionals, and others avoid visiting the Division's office. Virtually all services that the Division provides are available through the Division's website, email and phone systems, and portal. (Contact information is included in this Advisory.)

If you must visit, [screen yourself ahead of time](#), wear a mask, and maintain social distancing. Use the Division's drop box to leave important documents. The drop box is located on the first floor of the Powers Building at One Capitol Hill, Providence, Rhode Island.

Note: The following page includes list of frequently used email addresses, phone numbers, and web addresses.

Contact information

The following table includes some of the most frequently used phone numbers and email addresses.

Rhode Island Division of Taxation – key phone numbers, email addresses		
Personal income tax	(401) 574-8829 (option #3)	Tax.Assist@tax.ri.gov
Forms and instructions	(401) 574-8970	Tax.Forms@tax.ri.gov
Sales/use tax, cigarette tax	(401) 574-8955	Tax.Excise@tax.ri.gov
Collections	(401) 574-8941	Tax.Collections@tax.ri.gov
Portal	(401) 574-8484	TaxPortal@tax.ri.gov
Corporate and business taxes	(401) 574-8935	Tax.Corporate@tax.ri.gov
Estate tax	(401) 574-8829 (option #8)	Tax.Estate@tax.ri.gov
Sale of real estate by nonresident	(401) 574-8829 (option #4)	Tax.Assist@tax.ri.gov
Employer taxes (including UI, TDI)	(401) 574-8700	
Registering a business	(401) 574-8938	
Main phone number	(401) 574-8829	
Phones are typically staffed from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. business days.		

The following table includes some of the most frequently used web addresses.

Rhode Island Division of Taxation – frequently used web addresses*	
Main website	http://www.tax.ri.gov/
Coronavirus webpage	http://www.tax.ri.gov/COVID/
Forms and instructions	http://www.tax.ri.gov/taxforms/
Rhode Island Free File program	http://www.tax.ri.gov/misc/efile.php
Personal income tax refund status	https://www.ri.gov/taxation/refund/
Portal	https://taxportal.ri.gov/
Business tax EFT filing accounts	https://www.ri.gov/taxation/business/index.php
Payments via credit card, debit card	http://www.tax.ri.gov/misc/creditcard.php
Employer tax	http://www.uitax.ri.gov/
Detailed list of contact information	http://www.tax.ri.gov/contact/
Division of Taxation blog, for latest news	http://rhodeislandtax.blogspot.com/
Division of Taxation on Twitter	https://twitter.com/RhodeIslandTax
* Electronic filings and payments may be made via tax-preparation software, the Division's portal , online by credit card or debit card , or the Business Tax Filings webpage (depending on the filing and/or payment – not all methods accept all filings/payments. A third-party charge applies to payments by credit card/debit card).	

Note: The following page includes a copy of the Rhode Island Department of Administration's tool to screen visitors and others for symptoms of the coronavirus.

REOPENING RI

COVID-19 Screening Tool

Dept. of Administration approved tool to screen employees, clients, and/or visitors for symptoms of COVID-19 (7/15/20).

SYMPTOMS

HAVE YOU HAD ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS IN THE PAST THREE DAYS?	YES	NO
COUGH		
SHORTNESS OF BREATH OR DIFFICULTY BREATHING		
FEVER OR CHILLS		
MUSCLE OR BODY ACHES		
SORE THROAT		
HEADACHE		
NAUSEA OR VOMITING		
DIARRHEA		
RUNNY NOSE OR STUFFY NOSE		
FATIGUE		
RECENT LOSS OF TASTE OR SMELL		

RISK FACTORS

	YES	NO
Have you been in close contact (less than six feet) with anyone with COVID-19 or symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days? ¹		
Have you traveled anywhere outside the 50 United States in the past 14 days?		
Have you traveled to Rhode Island for a non-work-related purpose from a location with a high community spread rate (see list maintained by the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) at www.health.ri.gov/covid)? ²		
Are you under an active quarantine or isolation period as directed by the Rhode Island Department of Health or your healthcare provider?		
<p>IF YOU HAVE ANSWERED "YES" TO ANY OF THE QUESTIONS ABOVE, THEN YOU CANNOT ENTER THIS BUILDING FOR THE SAFETY OF OTHERS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees: Please contact your supervisor and your Human Resources representative. • Visitors: Please call to discuss when you can return to this facility. 		

¹ Does not apply to people who come into contact with people with symptoms of COVID-19 during the course of their daily work while wearing full and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). See <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assessment-hcp.html> for more information.

² Public health, public safety, and healthcare workers are exempt. Does not apply to anyone traveling for medical treatment, to attend funeral or memorial services, to obtain necessities like groceries, gas, or medication, to drop off or pick up children from day care, summer camps, or to anyone who must work on their boats. Does not apply to people who have had a negative COVID-19 test from a specimen taken no more than 72 hours prior to arrival in Rhode Island

reopeningri.com | health.ri.gov/covid
An official publication of the State of Rhode Island



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