

2011 Amnesty Program Overview



The Washington State Legislature approved an amnesty program in Substitute Senate Bill 6892 during a special session on December 11, 2010.

What is the amnesty program?

This amnesty program waives the penalty and interest for participating taxpayers on unpaid state business and occupation tax, state public utility tax, and state and local sales and use tax. The program is in effect from February 1 through April 30, 2011.

Who can participate?

The program is open to registered and unregistered businesses.

How do I participate in this program?

To participate in the program, taxpayers must:

- File an application with the Department by April 18, 2011.
- File all outstanding tax returns and any amended returns for which they are requesting waivers by April 18, 2011.
- Pay all tax due by April 30, 2011. All tax due on any invoice for which the taxpayer is seeking a waiver must be paid even if the tax is not included in this program. The penalties and interest on taxes not included in this program must also be paid.
- Pay all filing and other fees on tax warrants for which the taxpayer is seeking a waiver.
- File and pay all tax returns on time during the amnesty period.
- Waive the right to seek a refund or challenge the taxes on any invoice for which they seek a waiver.

Are there exclusions to this program?

Taxpayers are not eligible for this program if they:

- Have ever been assessed a penalty by the Department for evasion or misuse of a reseller permit or a resale certificate.
- Are in bankruptcy and payment of tax debt would violate federal bankruptcy law.
- Have ever been prosecuted for failing to pay or collect the proper amount of any tax administered by the Department under RCW 82.32.

What are the benefits of this program?

Several other states have brought in revenue through limited amnesty programs. It is estimated that this program will generate \$24.4 million for the state during the current fiscal year, plus an additional \$3.9 million for local governments.

A program like this will potentially help struggling businesses meet their obligations to the Department and allow them to focus on their businesses. Also, this program will encourage unregistered businesses to register and begin paying taxes.

More information

Visit the Department of Revenue website at dor.wa.gov/amnesty. To have a specific question answered, send an email to communications@dor.wa.gov or call 1-800-647-7706.