

Estate and Transfer Tax

RCW Chapter 83.100

Tax Base The value of all property located in Washington owned at a person’s date of death. The term “property” includes real estate and other property located in this state, as well as intangible assets, regardless of location.

Tax exemptions may reduce these taxes.
 For more information, refer to the [Tax Exemption Study](#).

Tax Rate After subtracting deductions, the remaining taxable estate pays on a graduated rate schedule ranging from 10% to 20%:

(1) Washington taxable estate of at least	(2) But less than	(3) Tax on amount in column (1)	(4) Plus this tax rate on the excess up to column (2)
\$0	\$1,000,000	\$0	10.00%
\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$100,000	14.00%
\$2,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$240,000	15.00%
\$3,000,000	\$4,000,000	\$390,000	16.00%
\$4,000,000	\$6,000,000	\$550,000	18.00%
\$6,000,000	\$7,000,000	\$910,000	19.00%
\$7,000,000	\$9,000,000	\$1,100,000	19.50%
\$9,000,000		\$1,490,000	20.00%

Recent Collections (\$000)

Fiscal Year	Collections	% Change	% of All State Taxes
2021	\$325,865	-49.1%	1.1%
2020	\$646,251	116.9%	2.4%
2019	\$298,017	46.5%	1.2%
2018	\$203,411	20.6%	1.0%
2017	\$168,710	25.3%	0.9%
2016	\$134,680	-12.6%	0.8%
2015	\$154,040	-1.3%	0.7%
2014	\$156,019	49.0%	0.8%
2013	\$104,680	-8.8%	0.9%
2012	\$114,828	1.7%	0.6%

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Distribution of Receipts The Education Legacy Trust Account receives receipts from the estates of those who died on or after May 17, 2005. The general fund receives receipts from the estates of those that died prior to May 17, 2005.

Levied by State

Administration Department of Revenue

If the gross value of an estate exceeds the filing threshold, administrators or personal representatives of the estate must file an Estate and Transfer Tax Return within nine months of a person's death. If applicable, administrators must include a copy of the federal estate tax return, with the state estate tax return. Once the estate pays the taxes, the department issues a release stating the administrators can transfer the deceased person's property.

History 2013 Added qualified terminable interest property (QTIP) in the Washington taxable estate when the second spouse dies, regardless of when the spouse acquired the interest in the property.

Beginning with the estates of decedents dying in 2014, also:

- Provided an annual adjustment to the Washington estate tax threshold based on the Consumer Price Index.
- Increased the top four estate tax rates.
- Allowed a qualified family-owned business interests (QFOBI) deduction.

2012 The Washington Supreme Court found that the decedents' Washington estate should exclude qualified terminable interest property (QTIP) when computing Washington's estate tax in the consolidated cases of *Estate of Bracken and Estate of Nelson v. State of Washington* on October 18, 2012.

2006 The state estate tax survived a repeal attempt in November 2006, when voters rejected Initiative 902.

2005 The Washington Supreme Court overturned Washington's estate tax in *Hemphill et al v. State of Washington* on February 3, 2005.

Effective May 17, 2005, enacted a "stand-alone" estate tax based on the Internal Revenue Code as of January 1, 2005.

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2001 The U.S. Congress phased out the federal estate tax by 2010 and eliminated the credit for state taxes at the end of 2004.

Washington continued collecting the estate tax based on the Internal Revenue Code as of January 1, 2001.

1981 Voters approved Initiative 402 repealing the state inheritance and gift taxes effective January 1, 1982.

The initiative allowed continuation of a state estate tax equal to the amount of federal estate tax credit, referred to as a “pick-up” tax.

1979 Washington enacted comprehensive revisions to the inheritance tax.

1941 Washington enacted a companion gift tax at rates equal to 90% of the inheritance tax rates.

1901 Washington established the inheritance tax which became one of the first state taxes. A court ruling upheld the tax as an excise tax on the privilege of inheriting property, and not as a tax on the property itself.