
Tax Compliance Guide

Alternative Reporting Schedules Topic 375

(09/2011)

In general, the *Westminster Municipal Code* requires every person engaged in business in the City to make a return of taxes due by the 20th of the month for the preceding calendar month. A return is required whether or not taxes are due. Any tax due must be paid at the time the return is filed.

Some taxpayers keep their accounting records on specialized calendars and prefer to report taxes due for these specialized periods as opposed to calendar periods. The Code allows the Finance Director to accept returns on an alternate schedule if monthly filing poses an unnecessary hardship. Such alternate schedule cannot jeopardize the collection of the taxes due. Taxpayers with small average annual tax liabilities are automatically permitted to file returns on a quarterly or annual basis.

Advanced Permission Required

Taxpayers who wish to report according to these specialized calendars must request permission in advance of each calendar year. A letter detailing the specific system used, along with a calendar of each period's starting and ending dates, must be sent to the Sales Tax Division. Approval of the proposed reporting schedule will be sent in writing along with a list of return due dates. Permission may be revoked at the discretion of the Finance Director. Written notice of revocation will be sent to the taxpayer, who must immediately begin filing on a calendar month basis.

Taxpayers utilizing specialized accounting calendars may file on a standard calendar basis without permission, but the transactions reported must include all transactions occurring within such calendar period and no more or less. This would require specialized accounting system reports for tax reporting that summarize transactions by calendar periods rather than accounting periods.

Due Dates for Alternative Schedules

A return must be filed (and taxes must be paid) by the 20th day following the end of a reporting period. This often means that the actual day of the month that a return is due may change from period to period and year to year. As with calendar basis returns, if the 20th day falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or City holiday, the due date is extended to the next business day. Note that City administrative offices are not open on Fridays; however, due dates falling on a Friday are not extended. Taxpayers must submit accounting calendars to the Sales Tax Division in advance of each calendar year so that the appropriate due dates can be calculated and entered into the taxpayer's account.

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Examples

1. Retailer A accounts for sales on a 13-period basis. The second period of the 2011 fiscal year begins on January 17, 2011 and ends on February 13, 2011. The return for this period is due March 7, 2011, because the 20th day (March 5) falls on a Saturday.
2. Retailer B accounts for sales on a 4-4-5 fiscal calendar, but does not wish to report sales taxes on this basis. Retailer B creates reports that summarize sales for each calendar month, even though these months often cover two of Retailer B's accounting periods. Retailer B will file a return on the 20th of each month, and does not need to notify the City of its 4-4-5 fiscal calendar.

Related Topics

Filing Frequencies and Due Dates

Citations

Westminster Municipal Code
§ 4-1-7. Returns Required; Time for Filing and Paying Total Tax Liability

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