

**TAX TIPS FOR  
MERCANTILE OR COLLECTION AGENCY  
CONDUCTING BUSINESS IN DELAWARE**

**Things You Should Know**

**Definitions** 30 Del. C., Ch. 23

A mercantile or collection agency includes every person operating a business of investigating financial ratings and credit and/or the collection of commercial accounts for other persons, except attorneys-at-law having a license to practice such profession in Delaware.

**Gross Receipts**

Consideration for services rendered includes cash, checks, credit cards, gift certificates, travelers' checks, money orders, barter, trade-ins, manufacturer's coupons and rebates, and any other consideration of any kind.

**Gross Receipts Does Not Include**

- The gross amount of debts collected, only commissions and other services are taxable

**Gross Receipts May Not Be Reduced By:**

- Cost of material and/or labor
- Interest, discount or delivery costs
- State or Federal taxes

**License and Gross Receipts Requirements**

Mercantile and collection agencies are required to obtain a business license -- \$75 for the first location and \$25 for each additional location which must be renewed annually on or before December 31st of each year. Additionally, every collection agency must pay a gross receipts tax at the rate of .3983% (.003983) on taxable commissions and fees received from services provided in this State. The first \$100,000 of commissions and fees received per month (\$300,000 quarterly) are exempt from the gross receipts tax. Gross Receipt taxes should be filed on-line or with a paper form. Both can be accessed from our website at [www.revenue.delaware.gov](http://www.revenue.delaware.gov). To register with the Division of Revenue and obtain a business license, complete a Combined Registration Application, available on the Internet and mail to the Division of Revenue with the appropriate fee or you can file on-line at our OneStop site using the link above.

**Tax Rates and Exclusions**

|                    | <b>Tax Rate</b>        | <b>Monthly<br/>Exclusion</b> |
|--------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Collection Agency  | .003983                | \$100,000                    |
| Sample Calculation | Total Gross Receipts   | \$171,000                    |
|                    | Less Exclusion         | <u>100,000</u>               |
|                    | Taxable Gross Receipts | \$71,000                     |
|                    | Tax Rate               | X <u>.003983</u>             |
|                    | Tax Due                | \$ 283                       |

(Note: Delaware requires that tax due be rounded-off to the nearest dollar amount.)

**Due Dates of Returns**

New licensees will file on a quarterly basis through their first calendar year. The Division of Revenue will then perform a "lookback" procedure and determine if the filing frequency should be changed.

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Monthly Filers   | 20 <sup>th</sup> day of the following month                        |
| Quarterly Filers | Last day of the first month after the end of the calendar quarter. |

**Gross Receipts Tax Exemption**

Gross receipts (and for purposes of the tax imposed by Chapter 43, Title 30 of the Delaware Code "rent" and "lease rental payments") from transactions between related entities are not subject to gross receipts tax. For this purpose, entities are "related" only if (i) the same five or fewer natural individuals own, directly, indirectly or beneficially, 80% or more of each entity, or (ii) 100% of each entity is owned by member or members of a single family. See Section 22120(b) of Title 30 of the Delaware Code for further details, including the definition of "family" for the purposes of this exclusion.

**Common Ownership/Direction**

A business that operates through more than one branch or legal entity is only entitled to one monthly or quarterly exclusion from gross receipts, if the branches or entities making up the enterprise have common ownership or common direction and control.

### Caution Concerning Multiple Exclusions

Nearly all licensees are permitted to reduce their monthly or quarterly gross receipts by certain specific exclusions in determining their taxable gross receipts. The Delaware Code limits the number of allowable exclusions for each general business activity. A taxpayer conducting a business activity for which an exclusion is provided is entitled to **ONLY ONE** monthly or quarterly exclusion regardless of the number of locations at which such activity is conducted. For example, a taxpayer who operates multiple offices or stores should aggregate the receipts from all services provided at all locations and subtract only one monthly exclusion. Separate retail licenses are not required for the sale of food and petroleum products. While the Division of Revenue may assign a unique business code which reflects the primary service sold, the service provider may sell multiple services without obtaining a separate license for each product line. However, separate licenses are required and separate exclusions are permitted if a taxpayer conducts more than one **ACTIVITY**, such as providing a service and retailing or wholesaling.

### Regulatory and Local Requirements

The Business License Issued by the Division of Revenue is not a regulatory license and the issuance of such license does not attest to the qualifications of the applicant to perform the activity described on such license. Many local jurisdictions have requirements for a business license and may have restrictions concerning the locations of conducting the referenced business activity. Please check with the local government office in the town, city or county in which you will conduct your business.

### General

If you have any questions, please contact one of the following offices:

| <i>Wilmington</i>   | <i>Dover</i>  | <i>Georgetown</i>   |
|---|---|---|
| Division of Revenue<br>Carvel State Office Building<br>820 North French Street<br>Wilmington DE 19801<br><br>(302) 577-8205 | Division of Revenue<br>Thomas Collins Building<br>540 South DuPont Highway<br>Suite 2<br>Dover DE 19901<br><br>(302) 744-1085 | Division of Revenue<br>20653 Dupont Blvd Suite 2<br>Georgetown DE 19947<br><br>(302) 856-5358 |

or by e-mail at: [rev\\_busaudit@delaware.gov](mailto:rev_busaudit@delaware.gov) or 302-577-8662

File Gross Receipts On-line:  
[www.grossreceiptsfiling.delaware.gov](http://www.grossreceiptsfiling.delaware.gov)

or

Print an Interactive Gross Receipts Coupon:  
[http://www.revenue.delaware.gov/services/Business\\_Tax/Forms\\_New.shtml#gr](http://www.revenue.delaware.gov/services/Business_Tax/Forms_New.shtml#gr)