



Rhode Island Division of Taxation

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State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

Department of Revenue

Advisory: Preparations for tax-filing season

The Rhode Island Division of Taxation is making preparations for the 2012 tax-filing season, during which taxpayers will file personal income tax returns covering the 2011 tax year.

This Tax Division advisory describes the recent mailing of about 15,000 postcards to taxpayers, and a change in policy involving the mailing of tax booklets. It also announces the date on which the agency will start accepting e-filed returns, the date on which the agency's walk-in tax-preparation service will begin, and other key items.

Postcard mailing, New policy for tax booklets

The Tax Division last week began mailing nearly 15,000 postcards to taxpayers who used the agency's forms last filing season. The postcards let taxpayers know that although automatic bulk mailings of tax booklets have stopped, taxpayers still have several options for obtaining forms, instructions, and booklets:

- Download a copy from the Tax Division's website, <http://www.tax.ri.gov>;
- Use the following e-mail address to request a form or booklet: TaxForms@tax.ri.gov;
- Visit the Tax Division's first-floor lobby at One Capitol Hill, Providence; or
- Call the Tax Division's forms request line at (401) 574-8970.

The postcards were distributed in lieu of the bulk mailing of tax booklets.

The Tax Division has elected not to do an automatic bulk mailing of tax booklets this season. The Internal Revenue Service eliminated its bulk mailing of federal income tax booklets a year ago. Many states have also ended their bulk mailings.

The electronic filing of tax returns, a process known as e-file, has become so popular among taxpayers and tax preparers, few people need paper forms and instructions, said Rhode Island Tax Administrator David M. Sullivan. About 75 percent of Rhode Island personal income tax returns are now e-filed, up from about 53 percent three years ago.

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"We urge all taxpayers -- and preparers -- to e-file," Sullivan said. E-filing provides prompt and accurate processing of returns, faster issuing of refunds, and the option to have a Rhode Island refund deposited directly into the taxpayer's bank or credit union account, Sullivan said.

Elimination of the automatic bulk mailing of tax booklets will also reduce the tax agency's printing and postage costs, saving money for taxpayers, Sullivan said.

Forms online

As a convenience, the Tax Division posts all of its forms online, at www.tax.ri.gov, providing easy access for taxpayers and tax professionals. The following forms and instructions have now been posted:

- the [resident Form RI-1040 for 2011](#);
- [instructions for the resident Form RI 1040 for 2011](#);
- the [Form RI-1040NR for nonresidents for 2011](#); and
- [instructions for the Form RI-1040NR for nonresidents for 2011](#).

More forms, instructions, and booklets covering the 2011 tax year will be posted on the Tax Division website soon. (Several forms have been discontinued, including the Form RI-1040S. Anyone who requests a Form RI-1040S will be issued a Form RI-1040 instead. The Form RI-1040 has been streamlined for the new filing season.)

Form RI-1040H mailing

Although the Tax Division has discontinued the automatic bulk mailing of tax booklets, the agency is continuing the automatic bulk mailing of the [Form RI-1040H property-tax relief claim forms](#), on which eligible taxpayers claim a "rebate" of up to \$300 per household. The Tax Division last week began mailing out nearly 8,000 copies of the form to those taxpayers who used the agency's form last filing season.

Walk-in service

The Tax Division's free walk-in tax-preparation service will open on January 18, 2012, at the agency's offices, One Capitol Hill, Providence. Staff will help walk-ins prepare and file their Rhode Island income tax returns, including the property-tax relief claim on Form RI-1040H. The service will be available from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. business days.

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Accepting e-filed returns

The Tax Division will begin accepting e-filed returns on January 18, 2012.

The agency expects an increase in e-filing in 2012 for two main reasons:

- **Preparer requirement** - Strict new federal regulations take effect in January that require almost all tax preparers to e-file federal income tax returns. Formerly, those who prepared 100 or more federal returns had to e-file. [Starting next month, those who prepare 11 or more federal returns must e-file.](#) Rhode Island is part of the joint federal/state e-file program that allows for the simultaneous electronic filing of federal and state income tax returns. As a result, taxpayers and preparers typically e-file their federal and Rhode Island returns together. Therefore, the new federal e-file requirement for preparers should result in more e-filed Rhode Island returns.
- **Modernized e-File:** The IRS is expanding use of a newer e-file system, known as Modernized e-File, or MeF. It is a web-based system that provides electronic filing and payment options for individuals and businesses. The IRS describes it as the next generation of electronic filing. It allows for the attaching of more documents. And e-filers receive, more quickly, acknowledgement of receipt of their returns.

Contact information

Taxpayers or practitioners who have questions regarding the Rhode Island personal income tax may refer to the Tax Division's website, at www.tax.ri.gov, or call the agency at (401) 222-1040 from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. business days.

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