

RCW 82.08.050 Buyer to pay, seller to collect tax—Statement of tax—Exception—Penalties. (1) The tax imposed in this chapter must be paid by the buyer to the seller. Each seller must collect from the buyer the full amount of the tax payable in respect to each taxable sale in accordance with the schedule of collections adopted by the department under the provisions of RCW 82.08.060.

(2) The tax required by this chapter, to be collected by the seller, is deemed to be held in trust by the seller until paid to the department. Any seller who appropriates or converts the tax collected to the seller's own use or to any use other than the payment of the tax to the extent that the money required to be collected is not available for payment on the due date as prescribed in this chapter is guilty of a gross misdemeanor.

(3) Except as otherwise provided in this section, if any seller fails to collect the tax imposed in this chapter or, having collected the tax, fails to pay it to the department in the manner prescribed by this chapter, whether such failure is the result of the seller's own acts or the result of acts or conditions beyond the seller's control, the seller is, nevertheless, personally liable to the state for the amount of the tax.

(4) Sellers are not relieved from personal liability for the amount of the tax unless they maintain proper records of exempt or nontaxable transactions and provide them to the department when requested.

(5) Sellers are not relieved from personal liability for the amount of tax if they fraudulently fail to collect the tax or if they solicit purchasers to participate in an unlawful claim of exemption.

(6) Sellers are not relieved from personal liability for the amount of tax if they accept an exemption certificate from a purchaser claiming an entity-based exemption if:

(a) The subject of the transaction sought to be covered by the exemption certificate is actually received by the purchaser at a location operated by the seller in Washington; and

(b) Washington provides an exemption certificate that clearly and affirmatively indicates that the claimed exemption is not available in Washington. Graying out exemption reason types on a uniform form and posting it on the department's website is a clear and affirmative indication that the grayed out exemptions are not available.

(7)(a) Sellers are relieved from personal liability for the amount of tax if they obtain a fully completed exemption certificate or capture the relevant data elements required under the streamlined sales and use tax agreement within 90 days, or a longer period as may be provided by rule by the department, subsequent to the date of sale.

(b) If the seller has not obtained an exemption certificate or all relevant data elements required under the streamlined sales and use tax agreement within the period allowed subsequent to the date of sale, the seller may, within 120 days, or a longer period as may be provided by rule by the department, subsequent to a request for substantiation by the department, either prove that the transaction was not subject to tax by other means or obtain a fully completed exemption certificate from the purchaser, taken in good faith.

(c) Sellers are relieved from personal liability for the amount of tax if they obtain a blanket exemption certificate for a purchaser with which the seller has a recurring business relationship. The department may not request from a seller renewal of blanket exemption certificates or updates of exemption certificate information or data

elements if there is a recurring business relationship between the buyer and seller. For purposes of this subsection (7)(c), a "recurring business relationship" means at least one sale transaction within a period of 12 consecutive months.

(d) Sellers are relieved from personal liability for the amount of tax if they obtain a copy of a direct pay permit issued under RCW 82.32.087.

(8) The amount of tax, until paid by the buyer to the seller or to the department, constitutes a debt from the buyer to the seller. Any seller who fails or refuses to collect the tax as required with intent to violate the provisions of this chapter or to gain some advantage or benefit, either direct or indirect, and any buyer who refuses to pay any tax due under this chapter is guilty of a misdemeanor.

(9)(a) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection (9), the tax required by this chapter to be collected by the seller must be stated separately from the selling price in any sales invoice or other instrument of sale. Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, for purposes of determining the tax due from the buyer to the seller and from the seller to the department it must be conclusively presumed that the selling price quoted in any price list, sales document, contract or other agreement between the parties does not include the tax imposed by this chapter. But if the seller advertises the price as including the tax or that the seller is paying the tax, the advertised price may not be considered the selling price.

(b) The tax required by this chapter to be collected by the seller need not be stated separately from the selling price or collected separately from the buyer on the following:

(i) All retail sales through vending machines; or

(ii) Retail sales of medical equipment paid by a health insurance provider, if the following conditions are met:

(A) The payment for the medical equipment is a fixed amount set by contract between the medical supply vendor and the health insurance provider; and

(B) The medical supply vendor is not entitled to collect the balance from the covered person, or other persons, after contractual amounts are paid by the health insurance provider.

(c) The department shall adopt rules as may be necessary to administer the provisions of this section.

(10) Where a buyer has failed to pay to the seller the tax imposed by this chapter and the seller has not paid the amount of the tax to the department, the department may, in its discretion, proceed directly against the buyer for collection of the tax. If the department proceeds directly against the buyer for collection of the tax as authorized in this subsection, the department may add a penalty of 10 percent of the unpaid tax to the amount of the tax due for failure of the buyer to pay the tax to the seller, regardless of when the tax may be collected by the department. In addition to the penalty authorized in this subsection, all of the provisions of chapter 82.32 RCW, including those relative to interest and penalties, apply. For the sole purpose of applying the various provisions of chapter 82.32 RCW, the 25th day of the month following the tax period in which the purchase was made will be considered as the due date of the tax.

(11) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(a) "Exemption certificate" means documentation furnished by a buyer to a seller to claim an exemption from sales tax. An exemption

certificate includes a reseller permit or other documentation authorized in RCW 82.04.470 furnished by a buyer to a seller to substantiate a wholesale sale.

(b) "Health insurance provider" includes, but is not limited to, commercial insurers, the medicaid program, and the medicare program.

(c) "Seller" includes a certified service provider, as defined in RCW 82.32.020, acting as agent for the seller. [2025 c 411 s 3; 2017 3rd sp.s. c 28 s 211; 2010 c 112 s 8; 2010 c 106 s 217. Prior: 2009 c 563 s 206; 2009 c 289 s 2; 2007 c 6 s 1202; prior: 2003 c 168 s 203; 2003 c 76 s 3; 2003 c 53 s 400; 2001 c 188 s 4; 1993 sp.s. c 25 s 704; 1992 c 206 s 2; 1986 c 36 s 1; 1985 c 38 s 1; 1971 ex.s. c 299 s 7; 1965 ex.s. c 173 s 15; 1961 c 15 s 82.08.050; prior: 1951 c 44 s 1; 1949 c 228 s 6; 1941 c 71 s 3; 1939 c 225 s 11; 1937 c 227 s 7; 1935 c 180 s 21; Rem. Supp. 1949 s 8370-21.]

Tax preference performance statement exemption—Automatic expiration date exemption—2025 c 411: "RCW 82.32.805 and 82.32.808 do not apply to this act." [2025 c 411 s 6.]

Findings—Intent—2017 3rd sp.s. c 28 ss 201-214: See note following RCW 82.08.0531.

Existing rights and liability—Severability—Application—Effective dates—2017 3rd sp.s. c 28: See notes following RCW 82.08.0531.

Retroactive application—2010 c 112: See note following RCW 82.32.780.

Effective date—2010 c 106: See note following RCW 35.102.145.

Finding—Intent—Construction—Effective date—Reports and recommendations—2009 c 563: See notes following RCW 82.32.780.

Part headings not law—Savings—Effective date—Severability—2007 c 6: See notes following RCW 82.32.020.

Findings—Intent—2007 c 6: See note following RCW 82.14.390.

Effective dates—Part headings not law—2003 c 168: See notes following RCW 82.08.010.

Intent—2003 c 76: "It is the intent of the legislature to exempt from business and occupation tax and to relieve from the obligation to collect sales and use tax from certain sellers with very limited connections to Washington. These sellers are currently relieved from the obligation to collect sales and use tax because of the provisions of the federal internet tax freedom act. The legislature intends to continue to relieve these particular sellers from that obligation in the event that the federal internet tax freedom act is not extended. The legislature further intends that any relief from tax obligations provided by this act expire at such time as the United States congress grants individual states the authority to impose sales and use tax collection duties on remote sellers, or a court of competent jurisdiction, in a judgment not subject to review, determines that a

state can impose sales and use tax collection duties on remote sellers." [2003 c 76 s 1.]

Intent—Effective date—2003 c 53: See notes following RCW 2.48.180.

Finding—Intent—Effective date—2001 c 188: See notes following RCW 82.32.087.

Severability—Effective dates—Part headings, captions not law—1993 sp.s. c 25: See notes following RCW 82.04.230.

Effective date—1992 c 206: See note following RCW 82.04.170.

Effective dates—Severability—1971 ex.s. c 299: See notes following RCW 82.04.050.

Project on exemption reporting requirements: RCW 82.32.440.