



# Sales and Use Tax on Vending Machines

**What owners and operators of coin-operated vending machines need to know.**

## Definitions

**Dealer** – Anyone registered to collect and pay sales tax to the State of Florida.

**Food and beverages** – Include milk, natural juice, food, gum, candy, hot chocolate, coffee, soft drinks, and tea.

**License** – The privilege to use real property or tangible personal property for any purpose.

**Operator** – Anyone who owns a coin-operated vending machine for the purpose of generating sales through that machine, keeps the inventory in that machine, and is responsible for removing the receipts from that vending machine.

**Other tangible items** – Includes, but is not limited to: tobacco, toys, baseball cards, prepaid telephone calling cards, laundry supplies, and sundries.

**Owner/Lessor** – The owner of the real property or owner of the vending machine who leases to an operator.

**Real property** – The land, its improvements, and fixtures; also called “realty” and “real estate.”

**Tangible personal property** – Personal property that you can see, weigh, measure, touch, or is in any manner perceptible to the senses, including electric power or energy.

**Vending machine** – A machine operated by coin, currency, credit card, slug, token, coupon, or similar device, which dispenses food, beverages, or other items of tangible personal property.

## What is Taxable?

**Sales** – Sales of food, beverages, and other tangible items are taxable when made through vending machines or devices supplying taxable merchandise having a sales price of 10 cents or more. The rate is six (6) percent **plus any local option discretionary sales surtax**.

**Machine rental** – The lease or license to use a vending machine is taxable. The tax is collected by the machine owner (lessor) from the operator (lessee) and is based on the lease amount.

**Real property rental** – If the machine owner is also the operator and places the machine at another person’s location, the arrangement between the operator and the location owner is a taxable lease or license to use real property. The tax is collected by the location owner (lessor) from the machine operator (lessee) and is based on the commission payment to the location owner (lessor).

## What is Exempt?

**Churches and Synagogues** – Receipts from vending machines operated by churches and synagogues are not taxable.

**Schools** – Food and beverages sold or dispensed through vending machines in a student lunchroom, student dining room, or other area specifically used for student dining in schools offering grades K through 12 are exempt. Food and beverages sold through vending machines in a gymnasium, shop, teacher’s lounge, corridor, or other area accessible to the general public and not meant for student dining are subject to tax. PTAs and PTOs (in schools offering grades K through 12 only) that sell food or beverages through vending machines may pay tax to their suppliers or remit the tax on all sales to us.

**Charitable organizations** – Food and drinks sold for 25 cents or less through a coin-operated vending machine maintained by a charitable organization qualified under sections 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4), Internal Revenue Code, are exempt.

## **Who Must Register to Collect Tax?**

The machine operator must remit tax on the total receipts from the machine. Owners leasing a machine to an operator must register and collect sales tax from the operator on the lease payments. A location owner must register and collect sales tax and local surtax on the commission or fee received from the operator. If the location owner fails to collect tax on the commission or the machine owner fails to collect the tax on the machine lease, the lessee or licensee must remit the state and local surtaxes due on their sales and use tax return (Form DR-15).

A machine operator who has a direct pay permit from us can self-accrue and pay the tax due on the commission, license fee, or rent paid to the location owner. This relieves the location owner of the obligation to collect tax. To apply for a permit, submit an *Application for Self-Accrual Authority/Direct Pay Permit – Sales and Use Tax* (Form DR-16A). This form is on our Internet site at [www.myflorida.com/dor](http://www.myflorida.com/dor).

## **How Do I Register to Pay Sales and Use Tax?**

You can register to file and pay sales and use tax using the Department’s free and secure Internet site or you may purchase software from an approved vendor. Visit our site to register and get information about approved software vendors. If you do not have Internet access, you can complete a paper *Florida Business Tax Application* (Form DR-1).

**Owners or operators with machines in several counties must have a separate registration for each county in which their machines are located. If all the machines are located in one county, only one registration is needed.**

## **When is Tax Due?**

Tax returns and payments are due on the 1st and late after the 20th day of the month following the month the receipts are collected from the machine. For example, if the receipts are removed on the 1st of one month, tax is not due until the 1st of the next month.

Returns and payments postmarked after the 20th are late. However, if the 20th falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or state or federal holiday, returns will not be late if they are postmarked on the next business day after the 20th.

If you are enrolled to pay tax electronically, you must initiate electronic payments no later than 5:00 p.m., ET, on the business day prior to the 20<sup>th</sup>.

## How is Tax Calculated?

- 1) Divide the total receipts from the machine(s) by the appropriate divisor (see table) to compute gross sales.
- 2) Total receipts minus gross sales equals the tax due.
- 3) Gross sales multiplied by the surtax rate equals the discretionary sales surtax collected.

<b>How Tax is Calculated on Vending Machine Sales</b>		
<b>If your sales and surtax rate is:</b>	<b>Then your divisor is:</b>	
	<b>Food and Beverages</b>	<b>Other Tangible Items</b>
6%	1.0645	1.0659
6.25%	1.06655	1.0683
6.5%	1.0686	1.0707
6.75%	1.0706	1.0727
7%	1.0726	1.0749
7.25%	1.07465	1.0770
7.5%	1.0767	1.0791
7.75%	1.0788	1.0812
8%	1.0808	1.0833

**Example:** The total receipts from a soft drink machine in a county with a combined sales and surtax rate of 6.5% total \$100. Total receipts divided by the food and beverage divisor for the 6.5% rate equals gross sales. Total receipts minus gross sales equals tax due. Gross sales multiplied by the surtax rate equals discretionary sales surtax collected.

$$\$100 \div 1.0686 = \$93.58 \text{ (gross sales)}$$

$$\$100 - \$93.58 = \$6.42 \text{ (tax due, including discretionary sales surtax)}$$

$$\$93.58 \times .005 = \$0.47 \text{ [discretionary sales surtax to be reported on Line 15(d) on the sales and use tax return]}$$

## Notice Requirements

You must display a notice on the upper front, or where it is easily seen by the public, on each **food or beverage vending machine**. An example of the notice is provided in this brochure. A machine owner will be charged a penalty of \$250 per machine, plus interest, for failure to display the notice.

The wording on the notice must be the same as shown in the example. The type must not be smaller than 14 point bold face, and the words “cash reward” must not be smaller than 30 point.

Churches and synagogues are exempt from this requirement.

## Example of Required Notice

**NOTICE TO CUSTOMERS:  
FLORIDA LAW REQUIRES THIS NOTICE TO BE POSTED ON ALL  
FOOD AND BEVERAGE VENDING MACHINES.  
Report any machine without a notice to 1-800-352-9273.**

**You may be eligible for a  
CASH REWARD.  
DO NOT USE THIS NUMBER TO REPORT PROBLEMS WITH THE  
VENDING MACHINE SUCH AS LOST MONEY OR OUT-OF-DATE  
PRODUCTS.**

## For Information and Forms

Information and forms are available on our Internet site at: [www.myflorida.com/dor](http://www.myflorida.com/dor)

To speak with a Department of Revenue representative, call Taxpayer Services, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., ET, at 800-352-3671.

Persons with hearing or speech impairments may call our TDD at 800-367-8331 or 850-922-1115.

For a written reply to tax questions, write:

Taxpayer Services Mail Stop 3-2000  
Florida Department of Revenue  
5050 W Tennessee St  
Tallahassee FL 32399-0112

## Get the Latest Tax Information

Sign up to get e-mail notices automatically when we post new tax publications at: [www.myflorida.com/dor](http://www.myflorida.com/dor)

## Reference Material

**Tax Laws** — Our online Tax Law Library contains statutes, rules, legislative changes, opinions, court cases, and publications. Search the law library for Rule 12A-1.044, Florida Administrative Code, *Vending Machines*; section 212.0515, Florida Statutes, *Sales from vending machines; sales to vending machine operators*; s. 212.183, F.S., *Rules for self-accrual of sales tax*; Rule 12A-15.011, F.A.C., *Coin-operated amusement and vending machines and other devices*; Rule 12A-1.0911, F.A.C., *Self-accrual authorization; direct remittance on behalf of independent distributors*.