



CITY OF PORTLAND
Assessor's Office
Christopher A. Huff, CMA

February 2021

Dear Personal Property Taxpayer,

This letter is being sent to all business owners who have taxable and exempt personal property located in the City of Portland as of April 1, 2021. If you own personal property located in the City of Portland on April 1, 2021, you are responsible for the annual personal property tax bill. For an accurate and timely assessment of your personal property, please complete the enclosed Personal Property Declaration form. Please be sure to sign, date and return the form to this office by **May 1, 2021**. If you are unable to meet this due date, a request for an extension must be made in writing to the Assessor's Office prior to the May 1st deadline.

Please note that this letter and Personal Property Declaration form is being mailed to the last known owner according to our records. If you received this in error, please notify the Assessor's Office to whom this notice should be directed to or if you have any questions regarding this mailing, please contact this office at 207-874-8486.

WHAT IS PERSONAL PROPERTY? Business personal property for purposes of taxation includes all tangible goods and chattels located in the City of Portland. This includes, but is not limited to, machinery, equipment, furniture and fixtures, computer equipment, software, leasehold improvements (includes fixtures specific to a business that may be attached to the real estate but is generally removed when the business relocates), telephones, copiers, appliances, shelving and racking, business signs, etc.

HOW IS PERSONAL PROPERTY ASSESSED? The taxable value for municipal assessment is generally original cost less depreciation. Items are not depreciated to zero. If it's in use, it has value. Our depreciation schedule is available on-line.

WHAT DOES THE ASSESSOR'S OFFICE NEED? The Assessor's Office needs to know the item description, quantity, date placed in service, original cost/purchase price of each personal property item used in the business. An electronic spreadsheet in Excel is preferred, but you can submit a paper copy of your assets with this information. Please send to assessors@portlandmaine.gov. Please format your list by category and provide a subtotal of each category by year. If submitting a BETE application (see BETE/BETR on reverse side), please separate your taxable list from your exempt items list. This small step is extremely helpful in ensuring accurate valuation totals as we process thousands of lists and forms.

WHAT IS THE MAINE LAW IN REGARDS TO PERSONAL PROPERTY? Title 36 MRSA §601 and §706-A are the relevant statutes of Maine law in regards to personal property taxation. These sections are included on the reverse side.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I FAIL TO RETURN THIS FORM? Per Title 36 MRSA §706-A, completing this form is not mandatory, however, once the request for this form is given to the taxpayer and the taxpayer does not furnish the list, they are barred of their right to make application to the Assessor to appeal or request any abatement of taxes for that tax year. *Failure to return a list will require the Assessor's Office to estimate the value of your personal property.*

WHAT ABOUT LEASED EQUIPMENT? Leasing companies typically declare a list to the Assessor of the assets they lease. Please note the Lessor and any leased equipment in the appropriate area of the form or on your asset listing.

389 Congress Street • Portland, Maine 04101 • 207-874-8486
assessors@portlandmaine.gov • www.portlandmaine.gov

BETE/BETR Programs

The Assessor's Office would like to make you aware that the State of Maine provides two programs to personal property taxpayers called the Business Equipment Tax Exemption (BETE) program and the Business Equipment Tax Reimbursement (BETR) program. For more information on whether your business qualifies for either of these programs, the filing requirements, deadlines for filing and applications to apply for each of these programs, please visit the Maine Revenue Services website at maine.gov/revenue/taxes/property-tax. You may also call them at 207-624-5600.

Title 36 M.R.S.A. §502. Property taxable; tax year

All real estate within the State, all personal property of residents of the State and all personal property within the State of persons not residents of the State is subject to taxation on the first day of each April as provided; and the status of all taxpayers and of such taxable property must be fixed as of that date.

Title 36 M.R.S.A. §601. PERSONAL PROPERTY; DEFINED.

Personal property for the purposes of taxation includes all tangible goods and chattels where ever they are and all vessels, at home or abroad.

Title 36 M.R.S.A. §706-A. TAXPAYERS TO LIST PROPERTY, NOTICE, PENALTY, and VERIFICATION.

Before making an assessment, the assessor may give seasonable notice in writing to all persons liable to taxation or qualifying for exemption pursuant to subchapter 4-C in the municipality, to furnish to the assessor a true and perfect lists of all the property the taxpayer possessed on the first day of April of the same year and may at the time of the notice or thereafter require the taxpayer to answer in writing all proper inquiries as to the nature, situation and value of the taxpayer's property liable to be taxed in the State or subject to exemption pursuant to subchapter 4-C. The list and answers are not conclusive upon the assessor.

As may be reasonably necessary to ascertain the value of property according to the income approach to value pursuant to the requirements of section 208-A or generally accepted assessing practices, these inquiries may seek information about income and expense, manufacturing or operational efficiencies, manufactured or generated sales price trends or other related information. A taxpayer has 30 days from receipt of a request for a true and perfect list or of proper inquiries to respond to the request or inquiries. Upon written request to the assessor, a taxpayer is entitled to a 30-day extension to respond to the request for a true and perfect list or proper inquiries, and the assessor may at any time grant additional extensions upon written request. Information provided by the taxpayer in response to an inquiry that is proprietary information, and is clearly labeled by the taxpayer as proprietary and confidential information, is confidential and is not a public record for purposes of Title 1, chapter 13. A notice to or inquiry of a taxpayer made under this section may be by mail directed to the last known address of the taxpayer or by any other method that provides reasonable notice to the taxpayer.

If notice is given by mail and the taxpayer does not furnish the list and answers to all proper inquiries, the taxpayer may not apply to the assessor for an abatement or appeal an application for abatement of those taxes unless the taxpayer furnishes the list and answers with the application and satisfies the assessing authority or authority to whom an appeal is made that the taxpayer was unable to furnish the list and answers in the time required. The list and answers are not conclusive upon the assessor.

If the assessor fails to give notice by mail, the taxpayer is not prohibited from applying for an abatement; however, upon demand, the taxpayer shall furnish the list and answer in writing all proper inquiries as to the nature, situation and value of the taxpayer's property liable to be taxed in the State. A taxpayer's refusal or neglect to answer the inquiries bars an appeal, but the list and answers are not conclusive upon the assessor.

The assessor may require the person furnishing the list and answers to all proper inquiries to subscribe under oath to the truth of the list and answers.