



NEWS RELEASE
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Contact: Amy Swanson
(503) 988-5384

County Attorney files lawsuits to collect local income tax

On Friday, The Multnomah County Attorney's office filed its first lawsuits with the Multnomah County Circuit Court against individuals who have not paid the County's voter-approved temporary income tax for 2003. The defendants have not responded to numerous attempts by the County to collect the tax, including a ten-day Final Notice to avoid having a lawsuit filed.

Lawsuits will be filed through the spring and summer for tax year 2003 collections. Individuals who are subject to legal action are those who have not responded to several letters requesting that they pay their tax or show they are not subject to the tax. The County will seek judgments including the tax, penalties, interest, and legal and collection costs. The timeline for all cases will depend on many factors including court scheduling and the complexity of each case. The County expects the first judgments to be awarded by this summer.

"We hope that as we file these lawsuits, others who owe the tax will see that we are serious about collecting the tax and will pay before it gets to this point" said Agnes Sowle, Multnomah County Attorney, "Ninety percent of taxpayers paid their county tax, and in fairness to them, the County has a duty to pursue collection from those who have not paid the tax they owe."

The County estimates that about \$8.5 million in tax revenue is due the County from an estimated 10,000 taxpayers who still owe the tax and 7,000 who are on payment plans.

Those who have not yet filed or paid their 2003 tax can still do so to avoid possible legal action. The tax for 2004 is due April 15, 2005. Forms and instructions are available on the County's Website at www.multcotax.org, or by calling the County's income tax helpdesk at 503-988-ITAX (4829).

The three-year income tax was created by the passage of Ballot Measure 26-48 in May 2003, and was reaffirmed by voters in November 2004. Funds from the 1.25 percent tax on the Oregon taxable income of Multnomah County residents goes to county schools, healthcare, senior services and public safety. For more information, contact Amy Swanson, (503) 988-5384.

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