
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Small Business and Revenue

IMPROVING CUSTOMER SERVICE

VANCOUVER – Rick Thorpe, Minister of Small Business and Revenue, today released Phase 2 of the Taxpayer Fairness and Service Code, furthering government’s ongoing commitment to ensure the best customer service possible for British Columbians.

“We are committed to taxpayers’ rights and maintaining our reputation as a centre of customer service excellence,” said Thorpe. “That’s why we have developed a clear set of service standards, so customers will know exactly what to expect when dealing with our government.”

The ministry will work together with customers to identify problems early and find solutions sooner. Phase 2 of the Taxpayer Fairness and Service Code identifies specific service standards including:

- Response to correspondence sent to the minister, deputy minister and assistant deputy minister within 14 business days.
- General sales tax e-mail inquiries will be answered within two business days.
- Complex sales tax e-mail inquiries and rulings will be answered within 20 business days.
- Sales and hotel tax account registrations within two business days.
- Sales and hotel tax account clearances within five business days.
- Sales, hotel, fuel or tobacco tax refunds within 30 calendar days.

As with Phase 1 of the Taxpayer Fairness and Service Code, Phase 2 was developed in partnership with several business organizations, including the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the B.C. Chamber of Commerce, the Retail Merchants Association of British Columbia and Retail Canada.

“Phase 2 of the code shows that Rick Thorpe and his ministry are serious about addressing the needs of small business and improving customer service,” said Laura Jones, vice-president of the B.C. and Yukon region of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. “We are pleased that the government listened to us and that the Taxpayer Fairness and Service Code is in place. We look forward to continuing work with the ministry on this important project.”

“We’ve been at the table and welcomed our participation in both Phase 1 and 2 of these timely consultations,” said Mark Startup, president and CEO of Retail BC. “Now the government is establishing relevant and meaningful timelines to enhance service to small business and all taxpayers. Hats off to Minister Thorpe and the government. These aggressive and laudable benchmarks are akin to what we see in the private sector.”

The Taxpayer Fairness and Service Code is available at ministry offices and online at www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/fairness. The ministry welcomes feedback and suggestions so it can add to and continue to improve service standards.

A photo of Minister Thorpe with Mark Startup, president and CEO of the Retail Merchants' Association of British Columbia, and Laura Jones, vice-president, B.C. and Yukon, Canadian Federation of Independent Business, is available online at: www.mediaroom.gov.bc.ca/DisplayEventDetails.aspx?eventId=14.

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