

# City of Olympia Business Tax and License Data Security

**Data Owner: Department of Revenue**

**RCWs:** RCW 19.02.115, 42.56.590, 82.32.330

The table below summarizes different scenarios and whether the information in question is confidential or not. Confidential information may not be shared internally or externally.

| #  | Scenario  | Confidential Information Yes or No?   |
|----|---|---|
| 1. | The Mayor asks if ABC Painting is reporting sales tax to your city.   | <b>Yes.</b><br>Detailed information about a business' tax reporting is confidential. Even though the mayor didn't ask for actual dollar amounts, disclosing whether the business has reported or not is considered a disclosure.  |
| 2. | A councilmember asks how much tax Jim's Plumbing has reported to your jurisdiction.   | <b>Yes.</b><br>Detailed information regarding a business's tax reporting is confidential.   |
| 3. | An employee of the fire department wants to know if Joe's Automotive indicated on their business license that they would be storing flammable or toxic materials.                               | <b>Yes.</b><br>The information contained on the business application, including the city addendum, is confidential.   |
| 4. | The county's monthly local tax distribution amount is higher than normal due to reporting of one taxpayer. At a council meeting, the difference is discussed but no taxpayer name is disclosed. | <b>No.</b><br>Talking about the distribution amounts as a whole and even stating that it is due to one taxpayer's reporting is allowed as long as the taxpayer's name and the amount the taxpayer reported is not disclosed.<br>The taxpayer's business activity (i.e. hotel) cannot be disclosed if there are less than three businesses with that activity in the jurisdiction. |
| 5. | The economic development director asks whether a business is registered and if so what is their address?  | <b>No.</b><br>Any information contained in the on-line Business Registration Lookup or the Business License Lookup tools is considered public information.<br>However, lists of licensees may not be distributed.   |
| 6. | Another jurisdiction contacts you to see if ABC Painting has reported sales tax to your jurisdiction.   | <b>Yes.</b><br>The information the DoR provides one jurisdiction may not be shared with another.  |
| 7. | A reporter contacts you to confirm the amount of tax reported by a taxpayer to your jurisdiction. The reporter got the figure from the business.  | <b>Yes.</b><br>The city must still hold the information confidential.   |
| 8. | The finance director prepares a report for a council meeting showing the sales tax distributions by NAICS code.   | Depends on the number of taxpayers:<br><b>Yes</b> - As a policy, the DoR does not allow disclosure of information when there are fewer than three taxpayers in a NAICS code. If there are fewer than three, the identities of the taxpayers may be determinable.<br><b>No</b> - If there are three or more taxpayers, there is no risk of disclosure.                             |