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About ND Office of State Tax Commissioner

Mission Statement
The mission of the Office of State Tax Commissioner is to fairly and effectively administer the tax laws of North Dakota.

Vision Statement
The vision of the Office of State Tax Commissioner is to instill the highest degree of public confidence in our integrity and reliability by providing prompt, accurate and courteous service while promoting compliance with the tax laws of North Dakota.

Guiding Principles
We treat our customers as we would want to be treated
Customer service comes first. The public, other government officials and our coworkers are our customers. Conduct business in a courteous, dependable and professional manner. Anticipate the unexpressed needs of our customers.

We extend cooperation and assistance to fellow public servants
Be consistent and accountable in our relationships with legislators, government officials and government personnel. Strive to earn respect for ourselves and elevate the public perception of all state employees.

We uphold the Taxpayer Bill of Rights
Recognize the rights of taxpayers. Provide an equal and meaningful opportunity for taxpayers to be heard. Educate taxpayers on their responsibilities and rights under North Dakota tax law.

We make wise and prudent use of all resources
Take seriously the responsibility the citizens of North Dakota have given us. Improve service through the effective use of technology and other resources.

We recognize employees are our biggest asset
Encourage personal and professional growth. Recruit and select well qualified employees based on high standards. Recognize the achievements of employees.

We recognize each individual’s contribution to the team
Explore and implement leadership styles that encourage teamwork. Foster a work climate which builds on team strengths while encouraging individual initiative. Acknowledge all coworkers as members of the same team.

We value those with whom we work
Communicate with our coworkers in an open, honest and courteous manner. Respect our differences and consider the views of the entire staff.
History

The Office of State Tax Commissioner has been in existence as an independent state agency since 1912. During the period from 1890 to 1912, some of the functions now performed by the Tax Commissioner were handled by the State Auditor. From 1912 to 1919, a nonpartisan Tax Commission composed of three members appointed by the Governor, with consent of the Senate, administered the tax laws of the state. In 1919, the Tax Commissioner was appointed by the Governor, with the consent of the Senate. In 1941, the Tax Commissioner post became an elective office. North Dakota is the only state with an elected Tax Commissioner.

The growth of the Office of State Tax Commissioner staff has been proportional to the increase in the number of citizens affected by tax laws, the addition of new tax types, the increased complexity of tax laws, and the demands for added services by political subdivisions and the public at large.

The budget for the Tax Commission in 1912 was not sufficient to permit hiring the secretary which the legislation creating the commission authorized. The first department staff member was hired in 1913. By 1928 the department had grown to 12 employees. The Tax Department continued to grow and by 1995 the number of employees peaked at 157. In recent years, staff numbers have been reduced through effective use of technology, and by streamlining duties and by finding efficiencies within the department. The Office of State Tax Commissioner was authorized 136 permanent staff members for the 2015-17 biennium. About 25 additional employees are hired on a temporary basis each income tax filing season.

The Office of State Tax Commissioner administers more than 30 different tax types and collects more than 90 percent of all state general fund revenue.
The Office of State Tax Commissioner is committed to the health and wellness of its employee. The Health In Progress (HIP) committee works to provide healthy snacks, recipes and activities throughout the year.

**Wellness Fruits/Veggies**

Once per week our HIP committee provides a healthy snack in the kitchenettes for just 25 cents per serving. The snack consists of fruits, vegetables and/or healthy nuts.

**Wellness Points for Loot**

The North Dakota State Employee insurance plan includes a wellness program. The program allows you to enter your healthy activities to earn points that are equivalent to $250 in incentives ($500 per household) or money toward your fitness center membership. The rewards points can be converted into merchandise and/or gift cards.

**Wellness Challenges & Seminars**

The HIP committee holds various wellness challenges and events throughout the year. Some of the challenges and seminars are through the employee insurance plan and can earn you wellness points. Others are department challenges for money or movie tickets.
Capitol Complex

The North Dakota State Capitol Complex is comprised of the state capitol building, the Department of Transportation, the Heritage Center museum, the State Liberty Memorial Building, the State Office Building, and the Governor’s residence.

Cafeteria

Open most of the day Monday through Friday, the Capitol Cafe is located on ground floor of the capitol. Capitol Cafe offers a variety of breakfast items, soups, salad, pizza, grilled items, deli sandwiches and entrees. In addition, there are dessert items, a wide selection of beverages and snacks, and items pre-packaged “to go.”

Vending Machines

The North Dakota State Capitol has vending machines with a variety of snacks and beverages available. Snack vending is located on ground floor and beverage vending is located on various floors/locations throughout the capitol.

Walking Paths

The North Dakota State Capitol Complex has many walking routes mapped out around the capitol grounds, as well as inside the capitol for those cold winter months. Maps are available online with route and distance information. Full-time state
employees are allotted two twenty minute breaks (one in the morning and one in the afternoon). Many employees walk these routes during their breaks.

**Location**
The North Dakota State Capitol is located near the middle of Bismarck, with convenient access to both north and south Bismarck. With the Heritage Center/State Museum, and the state library nearby, there are plenty of things to do right here.

**Capitol Events**
There are many events that take place in or near the capitol. For example: Pride of Dakota Day takes place twice per year on ground and first floors. It is an event that brings Pride of Dakota vendors together to sell their unique products. Another example is the yearly farmer’s market that take place in front (south side) of the capitol.
Agency Locations

With more than 130 employees, the North Dakota Office of State Tax Commissioner occupies the following office space:

- Three floors in the capitol tower: 7th floor, 8th floor & 16th floor
- Office space at the State Liberty Memorial Building
- Field offices in the following cities: Dickinson, Fargo, Grand Forks, Minot and Williston
- State Office Building from March through May

All-Staff Meetings

Once per year, all employees of the Office of State Tax Commissioner come together for an all-staff meeting. This meeting is designed to bring employees together for agency updates, new information for employees, legislative updates and more. Sometimes there is even a keynote speaker brought in to discuss relevant workplace topics.

Dress Code/Casual Days

The Office of State Tax Commissioner’s dress code is usually business casual. We expect employees to convey a professional appearance. However, many casual days are allowed throughout the year to raise money. Employees are allowed to wear jeans for a small fee (usually $1). The money collected goes to our HIP fund, our activity committee fund, United Way or various other charities that we support. For more information, see HIP on page 4 and activity committee on page 13.
**Work & Flex Schedule**

Office of State Tax Commissioner core office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding state holidays. Work hours will be arranged with and approved by your supervisor. In some cases, a flex schedule (adjusted work week and/or a modified lunch) can be accommodated.

**Kitchenettes**

Each floor the Office of State Tax Commissioner occupies, excluding the State Liberty Memorial Building and field office locations, has a kitchenette with a microwave, sink, small refrigerator and coffee pots. The kitchenettes were added for employees to store and make snacks and meals. Please note that we like baked goods. So feel free to bring a signature item to share!

**Caffeine-Boost Central: Coffee/Cappuccino**

Coffee, hot water and cappuccino are all available in the kitchenette for a nominal fee. Supplies are provided by the activity committee. All fees collected go back into the coffee fund to purchase supplies.

**Standing Work Stations**

Many employees within the Office of State Tax Commissioner benefit from a standing work station. If you’d prefer to stand while you work, ask your supervisor if there is one available for you to try.
SAFETY

The Office of State Tax Commissioner recognizes that the safety, health and well-being of our employees is a high priority in the daily functions of our department’s operation. To facilitate such activities, we comply with all governmental mandated rules and regulations as they apply to the work activities in our workplace. This compliance and commitment from all levels of management shall ensure a safe work environment for all our employees. Capitol security creates and maintains a safe and secure environment for employees while allowing for the citizens of North Dakota to access their government representatives and agencies. Capitol security provides 24 hour coverage of the capitol complex.

Emergency duress buttons are located at various places throughout the department. Duress activation provides instant, silent notification that security has been requested. These buttons should be used when a threat is perceived. Emergencies include threats and medical situations. For other emergencies or security issues, emergency contact numbers for Capitol Security are available on our agency intranet.
**Special Events**

**Summer Picnic**
Every summer the activity committee plans an off-site picnic for employees and their families. This is a yearly outdoor (weather permitting) event that is funded by the activity committee. Depending on the amount in the activity committee fund, a small fee may be charged for attendees. Great food. Great fun. Get your yard ready for rain. A storm usually passes through after the picnic!

**Halloween Trick-or-Treat Fun**
Most years around Halloween, employee kids and grandkids are invited to trick-or-treat at participating offices within our agency. Participating kids should expect to leave with a lot of loot!

**Christmas Potluck**
The Christmas potluck is usually held the week before Christmas. Each floor’s conference room is taken over by sweet and savory treats and dishes for employees to enjoy. Get out your elastic-wasted pants for this one.

**Christmas Party**
The activity committee also puts on an off-site Christmas party each year. All employees are invited to attend and may bring one adult guest.
Coffee with the Commish

The tax commissioner has coffee with all new employees, and some current employees once per quarter. It is a good opportunity for employees to discuss what is going on in their sections, discuss any ideas they have, ask any questions they may have, and to get to know the commissioner better.

Coffee is on the commish, so make sure you get a LARGE!

In the Know

ThumbTax Intranet

The Office of State Tax Commissioner has an internally-viewable website, AKA intranet, that keeps employees up-to-date on agency events, happenings, policies and more.

Internal Emails

Useful information is also emailed out utilizing our internal email lists. There are lists for all employees, and certain groups.

Calendar Access

The Office of State Tax Commissioner allows all employees to see each other’s calendars in Microsoft Outlook. This makes scheduling meetings much easier.
Activity Committee

The activity committee exists to build camaraderie among employees by providing extracurricular activities, events and awards. The committee also works to help employees engage in their community by facilitating philanthropic opportunities.

United Way Fundraising
Each year, our employees pledge donations to United Way, participate in jeans days for United Way, and hold fundraisers that benefit United Way.

Sunshine Fund
The activity committee maintains a sunshine fund that is used to send something nice to an employee who just had/adopted a baby, has been hospitalized and/or had surgery, or has had a death in the family.

Christmas Charity
A portion of the money collected for activity committee jeans days throughout the year goes toward the Christmas Charities. The activity committee conducts a review process of local charities and chooses several that will receive donations.
Health In Progress (Wellness) Committee

The HIP Committee provides opportunities for employees to develop a healthier lifestyle through the adoption of productive habits and positive attitudes that contribute to their well-being. More information on the HIP programs may be found on page 4.

As a State Employee

Council of State Employees (COSE)

The mission of the COSE is to enhance the morale and public image of state employees through the recognition of their personal, civic, and work contributions.

State Employee Recognition Week
Each year, COSE puts together a list of events for state employees to participate in during State Employee Recognition Week (SERW). Events such as a wellness fair, media exchange, complimentary snacks and/or meals, prize drawings, charity drives, and organized walks are often among the many events enjoyed by state employees during SERW.

Discounts at Various Establishments
Various establishments across the state offer discounts to state employees. A list of known establishments is listed on the COSE website.

COSE Drawings
COSE holds a few drawings throughout the year that are open to state employees. Winnings can include anything from VISA gift cards to frozen turkeys.
Website & Social Media

Website
www.nd.gov/tax

Facebook
www.facebook.com/ndtaxdepartment

Twitter
www.twitter.com/ndtaxdepartment

YouTube
www.youtube.com/ndtaxdepartment

LinkedIn
www.linkedin.com/ndtaxdepartment