

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2010 RECONVENED SESSION

CHAPTER 804

An Act to amend and reenact §§ 58.1-1021.01, 58.1-1021.02, and 58.1-1021.03 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 58.1-1021.02:1, relating to the tobacco products tax.

[S 478]

Approved April 21, 2010

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 58.1-1021.01, 58.1-1021.02, and 58.1-1021.03 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 58.1-1021.02:1 as follows:

§ 58.1-1021.01. Definitions.

As used in this article, unless the context clearly shows otherwise, the term or phrase:

"Distributor" means (i) any person engaged in the business of selling tobacco products in the Commonwealth who brings, or causes to be brought, into the Commonwealth from outside the Commonwealth any tobacco products for sale; (ii) any person who makes, manufactures, fabricates, or stores tobacco products in the Commonwealth for sale in the Commonwealth; (iii) any person engaged in the business of selling tobacco products outside the Commonwealth who ships or transports tobacco products to any person in the business of selling tobacco products in the Commonwealth; or (iv) any retail dealer in possession of untaxed tobacco products in the Commonwealth.

"Loose leaf tobacco" means any leaf tobacco that is not intended to be smoked, but shall not include moist snuff. Loose leaf tobacco weight unit categories shall be as follows:

1. *"Loose leaf tobacco half pound-unit" means a consumer sized unit, pouch, or package containing at least four ounces but not more than eight ounces of loose leaf tobacco, by net weight, produced by the manufacturer to be sold to consumers as a single unit and not produced to be divided or sold separately and containing one individual package.*

2. *"Loose leaf tobacco pound-unit" means a consumer sized unit, pouch, or package containing more than eight ounces of loose leaf tobacco, by net weight, produced by the manufacturer to be sold to consumers as a single unit and not produced to be divided or sold separately and containing one individual package.*

3. *"Loose leaf tobacco single-unit" means a consumer sized unit, pouch, or package containing less than four ounces of loose leaf tobacco, by net weight, produced by the manufacturer to be sold to consumers as a single unit and not produced to be divided or sold separately and containing one individual package.*

"Manufacturer" means a person who manufactures or produces tobacco products and sells tobacco products to a distributor.

"Manufacturer's representative" means a person employed by a manufacturer to sell or distribute the manufacturer's tobacco products.

"Manufacturer's sales price" means the actual price for which a manufacturer, manufacturer's representative, or any other person sells tobacco products to an unaffiliated distributor.

"Moist snuff" means a tobacco product consisting of finely cut, ground, or powdered tobacco that is not intended to be smoked but shall not include any finely cut, ground, or powdered tobacco that is intended to be placed in the nasal cavity.

"Person" means any individual, corporation, partnership, association, company, business, trust, joint venture, or other legal entity.

"Retail dealer" means every person who sells or offers for sale any tobacco product to consumers.

"Tobacco product" or "tobacco products" means (i) "cigar" as defined in § 5702(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, and as such section may be amended; (ii) "smokeless tobacco" as defined in § 5702(m) of the Internal Revenue Code, and as such section may be amended; or (iii) "pipe tobacco" as defined in § 5702(n) of the Internal Revenue Code, and as such section may be amended. *"Tobacco products" shall also include loose leaf tobacco.*

§ 58.1-1021.02. Tax on tobacco products.

A. In addition to all other taxes now imposed by law, there is hereby imposed a tax upon the privilege of selling or dealing in tobacco products in the Commonwealth by any person engaged in business as a distributor thereof, at the ~~rate~~ following rates:

1. *Upon each package of moist snuff, at the rate of \$0.18 per ounce with a proportionate tax at the same rate on all fractional parts of an ounce. The tax shall be computed based on the net weight as listed by the manufacturer on the package in accordance with federal law.*

2. *For purposes of the tax under this article, loose leaf tobacco shall be classified as loose leaf*

tobacco single-units, loose leaf tobacco half pound-units, and loose leaf tobacco pound-units. Such tax shall be imposed on the distributor for loose leaf tobacco as follows:

- a. \$0.21 for each loose leaf tobacco single-unit;
- b. \$0.40 for each loose leaf tobacco half pound-unit;
- c. \$0.70 for each loose leaf tobacco pound-unit; and
- d. For any other unit, pouch, or package of loose leaf tobacco, the tax shall be by net weight and shall be \$0.21 per unit, pouch, or package plus \$0.21 for each increment of four ounces or portion thereof that the loose leaf tobacco exceeds 16 ounces.

The tax for each unit, pouch, or package of loose leaf tobacco shall be in accordance with the provisions of subdivisions a. through d. only and regardless of sales price.

3. Upon tobacco products other than moist snuff or loose leaf tobacco, at the rate of 10 percent of the manufacturer's sales price of such tobacco products.

Such tax shall be imposed at the time the distributor (i) brings or causes to be brought into the Commonwealth from outside the Commonwealth tobacco products for sale; (ii) makes, manufactures, or fabricates tobacco products in the Commonwealth for sale in the Commonwealth; or (iii) ships or transports tobacco products to retailers in the Commonwealth to be sold by those retailers. It is the intent and purpose of this article that the distributor who first possesses the tobacco product subject to this tax in the Commonwealth shall be the distributor liable for the tax. It is further the intent and purpose of this article to impose the tax once, and only once on all tobacco products for sale in the Commonwealth.

B. No tax shall be imposed pursuant to this section upon tobacco products not within the taxing power of the Commonwealth under the Commerce Clause of the United States Constitution.

C. A distributor that calculates and pays the tax pursuant to subdivision A 1 or A 2 in good faith reliance on the net weight listed by the manufacturer on the package or on the manufacturer's invoice shall not be liable for additional tax, or for interest or penalties, solely by reason of a subsequent determination that such weight information was incorrect.

§ 58.1-1021.02:1. Reports by manufacturers of tobacco products.

Each manufacturer that ships tobacco products to any person located in the Commonwealth shall file a report with the Department no later than the twentieth of each month identifying all such shipments made by the manufacturer during the preceding month. Such reports shall identify the names and addresses of the persons within the Commonwealth to whom the shipments were made and the quantities of tobacco products shipped, by type of product and brand. The Tax Commissioner may authorize any manufacturer to file such reports for a period less frequently than monthly when, in the opinion of the Tax Commissioner, doing so would improve the efficiency of the administration of the tax imposed by this article. If a manufacturer is allowed to file other than on a monthly basis, each such report shall be due no later than the twentieth day of the month that immediately follows the close of the reporting period. Each such report shall contain the same information as required herein for monthly reporting.

§ 58.1-1021.03. Monthly return and payments of tax.

A. Every distributor subject to the tax imposed under this article shall file a monthly return no later than the twentieth of each month on a form prescribed by the Department, covering the purchase of tobacco products by such distributor during the preceding month, for which tax is imposed pursuant to subsection A of § 58.1-1021.02, during the preceding month. Each return shall show the quantity and manufacturer's sales price of each tobacco product (i) brought, or caused to be brought, into the Commonwealth for sale; and (ii) made, manufactured, or fabricated in the Commonwealth for sale in the Commonwealth during the preceding calendar month. Every licensed distributor outside the Commonwealth shall in a like manner file a return showing the quantity and manufacturer's sales price of each tobacco product shipped or transported to retailers in the Commonwealth to be sold by those retailers, during the preceding calendar month. The return shall be made on forms furnished or prescribed by the Department and shall contain or be accompanied by such further information as the Department shall require. The distributor, at the time of filing the return, shall pay to the Department the tax imposed under subsection A of § 58.1-1021.02 ~~on the manufacturer's sales price~~ for each such package of tobacco product purchased in the preceding month on which tax is due.

B. For the purpose of compensating dealers for accounting for the tax imposed under this article, a retail dealer or wholesale dealer shall be allowed when filing a monthly return and paying the tax to deduct two percent of the tax otherwise due if the amount due was not delinquent at the time of payment.

The Tax Commissioner shall prepare for each fiscal year an estimate of the total amount of all discounts allowed to retail or wholesale dealers pursuant to this subsection and such amount shall be taken into consideration in preparing the official estimate of the total revenues to be collected during the fiscal year by the Virginia Health Care Fund established under § 32.1-366. Any reduction in funding available for programs financed by the Virginia Health Care Fund as a result of such discounts shall be made up by the general fund.

2. That the provisions of this act shall become effective on January 1, 2011.