

The Ontario Ministry of Revenue's

**Service Commitments
and Standards in
Tax
Administration**

**Report for the period of
April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009**



Message from the Assistant Deputy Minister, Service Standards and Commitments

Ongoing improvements to delivery and quality of customer service has been a government-wide priority for more than a decade. At the Ministry of Revenue, we recognize that the need to improve never ends, nor do our customer's expectations for more convenient and accessible services. In an effort to respond to this need for continuous improvement, and build on service excellence, I am pleased to present the Ministry of Revenue's sixth annual report on customer service.

Our progress is measured against seven commitments and 18 service standards to help us identify how we are doing. Over the past year, we have continued to improve our methods of working and have enhanced the quality and efficiency of services we provide to our customers. The 2008/2009 report highlights the progress we've made in some key areas of customer service.

At the Ministry of Revenue, we are keeping pace with the rising expectations of Ontario citizens for high-quality, cost-effective public services. We are consulting with our customers and staff to identify service standards that meet our clients' needs. We are also working with other Ontario ministries to ensure the same level of service is being delivered government wide and our service standards reflect a diverse population, including people with disabilities.

Ministry of Revenue staff are committed to treating you, our customers, with respect, providing quality service, and applying tax laws with fairness and courtesy. We rely on and encourage your feedback to help us make changes, improve services and increase overall customer satisfaction. Please take a few moments to tell us how we're doing by completing our online [Quality Service Questionnaire](http://ontario.ca/revenue) available at ontario.ca/revenue.

Peter Rzadki
Assistant Deputy Minister
Service Standards and Commitments

Ensuring Accountability

As Chief Administrative Officer for the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Revenue, I was accountable for conducting a third party review of the data in the 2008/2009 SCSTA report.

This year's analysis involved a review conducted by Ontario Internal Audit to assess the adequacy of the controls, systems and procedures for reporting and the accuracy of the results. Based on the review, quality controls were found to be adequate and the results were accurately reported. These results were determined to be reliable for the Ministry of Revenue.

Based on my knowledge, this report presents accurately and fairly, in all respects, the status of results for the fiscal year April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009.

Helmut Zisser
Chief Administrative Officer
Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Revenue

Results - Commitments - April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009

Service Commitment	2008/2009 Annual Results	2007/2008 Annual Results	Diff.
	Satisfied or Very Satisfied	Satisfied or Very Satisfied	
1. Impartial and Professional Service. We will provide impartial, professional and courteous service and provide a means for you to hold us accountable for the services we provide. We will be pleased to deal with you or your authorized representative.	94%	94%	N/A
2. Privacy and Confidentiality. We will keep your tax returns and other information secure and confidential.	95%	94%	+1%
3. Accessible Information. We will offer clear, understandable and current tax information and will make this information available to you through various media.	90%	90%	N/A
4. Assistance. We will provide timely, accurate responses to questions and requests for tax information. We will explain to you the tax implications of your current tax situation and if you seek to learn more about your liability and how it is determined, offer you the option of meeting with us.	94%	94%	N/A
5. Reliable Written Information. We will provide written information that you can rely on.	93%	92%	+1%
6. Education. We will provide education and information programs on specific tax issues.	100%	100%	N/A
7. Voluntary Disclosure. We will allow you to voluntarily disclose your tax situation without incurring a penalty or being prosecuted for tax violations under certain conditions.	100%	100%	N/A

Results - Standards - April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009

Service	Service Standard	2008/2009 Annual Results	2007/2008 Annual Results	Diff.
General Standards				
Ensure information explaining significant change in tax policy or legislation is available.	By the next working day following the change.	95%	100%	-5%
Invite new Retail Sales Tax vendors to attend a PST-GST seminar.	Within 15 working days of being registered.	90% ¹	98%	-8%
Conduct Retail Sales Tax industry and/or topic specific seminars.	Schedule within 60 working days of request.	100%	100%	N/A
Government Common Service Standards				
Correspondence by fax, mail or electronic mail.	Respond within 15 working days or send acknowledgment within 5 working days.	91%	94%	-3%
Telephone General Enquiries	a) Pick up by third ring	100%	100%	N/A
	b) Call back within 1 working day.	66%	63%	+3%
Walk-in Enquiries	Post expected waiting times.	100%	100%	N/A
Customer Feedback/ Complaint Resolution	Document and acknowledge complaints within 2 working days; with each contact, provide opportunity for feedback on service.	74% ²	100%	-26%
Core Business Service Standards				
Registrations	Walk-in, mail-in and telephone - 1 working day. Through Ontario Business Connects - 15 working days. Other registration - 15 working days.	80% ³	95%	-15%
Refunds (once we receive all required info and documentation)	All refunds to be processed within 40 working days.	57% ⁴	71%	-14%
Account Adjustments	30 working days.	97%	86%	+11%
Tax Roll Updates	Walk-in and telephone - 2 working days. Mail - 15 working days	96%	98%	-2%

1. Implementation of the new business system resulted in a change to the business process. Capturing results was updated to reflect the new process.

2. A review of the process was conducted in Q1 and corrective action was implemented. Significant increases were experienced in Q2, Q3 and Q4, with Q4 achieving 100%.

3. The decrease is a result of transactions being held while transitioning to a new business system in Q1.

4. The decrease is a result of transactions being held while transitioning to a new business system in Q1

Service Commitments and Standards in Tax Administration : Report

Service	Service Standard	2008/2009 Annual Results	2007/2008 Annual Results	Diff.
Audit Standards				
Notice of Audit	Arrange mutually agreeable date for the commencement of the audit, generally with 15 working days notice	98%	99%	-1%
Audit – taxpayer to respond to the proposed adjustments	Given up to 30 working days to respond	96%	96%	N/A
Objections Standards				
Objections – contact by appeals officer	Within 3 months of the objection being assigned	98%	97%	+1%
Objections (complex objections) – Allow for response by objector to Opinion Letter	Within 30 working days from date of letter	99%	100%	-1%
Objections – resolution of objections dealing with interest and penalties	Within 3 months from date of receipt of Notice of Objection	97%	93%	+4%
Objections	Resolve 80% of objections within 2 years from date of receipt of Notice of Objection	100%	100%	N/A
Collections Standard				
Collections – time before legal action may be started	Allow 30 working days after original assessment (other than exceptional circumstances)	100%	100%	N/A

Next Steps

In 2008-2009, the Ministry of Revenue met its service standards by achieving a score between 80 and 100 per cent in 17 of our standards in tax administration – with 7 categories maintaining a score of 100 per cent year-over-year. These results are encouraging and the division will continue to make every effort to improve delivery of services and to achieve a score of at least 80 per cent in all our service standards.

Last year, the ministry committed to improving customer service in the areas of telephone standards, account adjustments, process times for objections, and distribution of the Quality Service Questionnaires. Our efforts resulted in improvements in three key areas:

- telephone response times improved by 3 per cent
- account adjustment timelines improved 11 per cent
- turn around times for interest and penalty objections increased by 4 per cent

In 2009-2010, the ministry will build on these results by:

- continuing to highlight the importance of the service commitments and standards to staff with a focus on general telephone enquiries and complaint resolution
- striving to improve refund timelines
- encouraging taxpayers to complete the Quality Service and Audit Quality Questionnaires to help us improve our ability to deliver services

The Ministry of Revenue will continue to evaluate our performance along with customer satisfaction to improve the level of services provided to taxpayers. Please comment on our services by completing our online Quality Service Questionnaire or by completing the Audit Quality Questionnaire, which is sent by mail after the completion of an audit.

The Ministry of Revenue is compliant under The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, with the first standard for customer service.

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