

**WAC 458-20-222 Veterinarians.** (1) **Introduction.** This section explains Washington's business and occupation (B&O), retail sales, and use tax applications to sales and services provided by veterinarians. It explains the tax liability resulting from the performance of professional services and the sale of medicines and supplies for use in the care of animals. This section also explains the tax liability of persons who provide other services for live animals including grooming, boarding, training, artificial insemination, and stud services.

(2) **Business and occupation tax.** Persons providing services for live animals are subject to the B&O tax as follows:

(a) **Service and other activities.** The service and other activities B&O tax applies to the gross income derived from veterinary services. For purposes of this section, "veterinary services" includes the diagnosis, cure, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of disease, deformity, defect, wounds, or injuries of animals. It also includes the administration of any drug, medicine, method or practice, or performance of any operation, or manipulation, or application of any apparatus or appliance for the diagnosis, cure, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of any animal disease, deformity, defect, wound, or injury. "Veterinary services" does not include the therapeutic use of an item of personal property opened and partly administered by the veterinarian or by an assistant under his or her direction, and taken by the customer for further administration by the customer to the animal, provided the charge for the item is separately stated on the invoice.

(i) The gross income derived from veterinary services includes the amount paid by a customer for any drug, medicine, apparatus, appliance, or supply administered by the veterinarian or by an assistant under his or her direction, even when the charge is separately stated on the invoice from charges for other veterinary services.

(ii) The service and other activities B&O tax applies to the gross income derived from grooming, boarding, training, artificial insemination, stud services, or other services provided to live animals. However, if the person providing these services also sells tangible personal property to a consumer for a separate and distinct charge, the charge made for the tangible personal property is subject to the retailing classification of B&O tax.

(b) **Retailing.** The retailing classification of B&O tax applies to the gross income from the sale of drugs, medicines, or other substances or items of personal property to consumers when the sale is not part of veterinary services. The retailing classification applies only when the veterinarian does not administer, or only administers part of the drug, medicine, or other substance or item of personal property to the animal with further administration to be completed by the customer. Adequate records must be kept by the veterinarian to distinguish drugs, medicines, or other substances or items of personal property that are administered as part of veterinary services from those that are sold at retail. The retailing classification also applies to gross income from the sale of tangible personal property for which there is a separate and distinct charge, when sold by persons providing grooming, boarding, training, artificial insemination, stud services, or other services for live animals.

(3) **Retail sales tax.** The retail sales tax applies to all the retail sales identified under subsection (2) of this section, unless a specific exemption applies.

(a) **Sales to veterinarians and others who provide services to live animals.** Sales of tangible personal property to veterinarians for use or consumption by them in performing veterinary services are re-

tail sales upon which the retail sales tax must be collected. Such sales include, among others, sales of medicines, bandages, splints and other supplies primarily for use by veterinarians in performing their professional services. Sales of tangible personal property to persons who provide grooming, boarding, training, artificial insemination, stud services, or other services for live animals for use or consumption by those persons in performing their services are also retail sales upon which the retail sales tax must be collected.

Sales to veterinarians and others who purchase tangible personal property for the purpose of resale in the regular course of business without intervening use by the buyer are sales at wholesale, and not subject to the retail sales tax. The buyer must present the seller with a resale certificate for purchases made before January 1, 2010, or a reseller permit for sales made on or after January 1, 2010, to document the wholesale nature of any sale as provided in WAC 458-20-102A (Resale certificates) and WAC 458-20-102 (Reseller permits). Even though resale certificates are no longer used after December 31, 2009, they must be kept on file by the seller for five years from the date of last use or December 31, 2014.

(b) **Sales to consumers.** Tangible personal property sold by a veterinarian to a consumer that is carried away by or left with the consumer is a retail sale and the retail sales tax must be collected. Items of personal property include those that the veterinarian may have opened and used for therapy but were taken by the consumer to complete the therapy. The tax applies whether the tangible personal property was sold at the time the professional services were performed or was sold subsequently, provided the charge for the item is separately stated. Sales to a consumer of tangible personal property by a person who provides other than veterinary services to live animals and who separately states the charges, are subject to retail sales tax and the retail sales tax must be collected. (See WAC 458-20-210 for additional information regarding sales to farmers.)

(c) **Exemptions.** A retail sales tax exemption is available for sales of feed for purebred livestock used for breeding purposes, provided the seller obtains a completed Farmers' Certificate for Wholesale Purchases and Sales Tax Exemptions certificate from the buyer. Also exempt are sales of semen for use in the artificial insemination of livestock. These sales remain subject to the retailing B&O tax. (See WAC 458-20-210 for additional information regarding exemptions for farmers.)

(4) **Use tax.** The use tax complements the retail sales tax by imposing a tax of like amount upon the use within this state as a consumer of any tangible personal property purchased at retail, where the user has not paid retail sales tax with respect to the purchase of the property used. (See also WAC 458-20-178.) If the seller fails to collect the appropriate retail sales tax, the purchaser is required to pay the retail sales or use tax directly to the department unless the purchase and/or use is exempt from tax. Complementary use tax exemptions are available for the use of those items identified in subsection (3)(c) of this section. Veterinarians and others who provide services to live animals are required to pay use tax on any samples that they acquire or give away unless retail sales tax or use tax has been previously paid on these samples.

(5) **Examples.** The following examples identify a number of facts and then state a conclusion. These examples should be used only as a general guide. The tax status of other situations must be determined after a review of all of the facts and circumstances.

(a) A dog owner brings her dog to a veterinarian for professional services. The dog has multiple wounds and a broken leg. The veterinarian sets the broken bone and uses a cast and other appropriate therapeutic medicines on the dog in the course of treatment. The veterinarian also applies some salve to the wounds and gives the remainder of the salve to the dog's owner for application over the next few days. The veterinarian segregates the charges for the veterinary services, including the cast materials, and the medicines. The charge for the salve is also separately stated on the billing invoice. The gross income for the veterinary services is subject to the service and other activities B&O tax classification. This includes the charges for the cast materials and the medicines. The charge for the salve is considered a retail sale, and subject to the retailing B&O and retail sales taxes. If the veterinarian had previously paid sales or use tax on the salve, he or she is allowed a tax paid at source deduction. (See also the discussion of tax paid at source deductions in WAC 458-20-102.)

(b) AB boards other person's horses for a fee. When AB bills the customer, AB separately lists the charges for the boarding services and the feed. The gross income received by AB for boarding services is subject to B&O tax under the service classification. The charges for the feed are subject to the retailing B&O and retail sales taxes. However, a retail sales tax exemption is available for any sales of feed for purebred livestock, if the livestock is used for breeding purposes and AB obtains a completed Farmers' Certificate for Wholesale Purchases and Sales Tax Exemptions certificate from the customer.

(c) CD trains and boards dogs for various lengths of time. CD bills the customer a lump sum amount for the training and boarding, including feed for the dogs. The gross income received by CD is subject to B&O tax under the service classification. CD must pay retail sales tax or use tax on the feed it purchases for the dogs.

(d) EF is a farrier and shoes horses for others. When EF performs this service, he lists a separate charge on the invoice for the horse-shoes. The charge for the horseshoeing service is subject to B&O tax under the service classification, and the separate charge for the horseshoes is subject to the retailing B&O and retail sales taxes. EF's purchases of the horseshoes are purchases for resale and not subject to the retail sales tax.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 82.32.300, 82.01.060(2), chapters 82.04, 82.08, 82.12 and 82.32 RCW. WSR 10-06-070, § 458-20-222, filed 2/25/10, effective 3/28/10. Statutory Authority: RCW 82.32.300. WSR 99-08-033, § 458-20-222, filed 3/31/99, effective 5/1/99; WSR 83-08-026 (Order ET 83-1), § 458-20-222, filed 3/30/83; Order ET 70-3, § 458-20-222 (Rule 222), filed 5/29/70, effective 7/1/70.]