

JULY 2021 - JUNE 2022

# ANNUAL REPORT



Department of  
**Revenue**  
*Washington State*





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Pictured: Columbia River

## VISION

Achieve the highest level of voluntary compliance by being the trusted leader in tax administration and public service.

## MISSION

To efficiently administer tax laws and public service programs with integrity.

## VALUES

Integrity, cooperation, accountability, respect, and excellence.

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Pictured: John Ryser, Acting Director

## Beginnings and Endings

I am pleased to share the Washington State Department of Revenue (DOR) Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Annual Report with you. This report details our key activities and greatest accomplishments – the work that matters most. This year was marked with beginnings and endings throughout the agency that carried with them significant impacts.

Like other organizations across the world, our agency began its transition to a post-pandemic workplace. Many of the safeguards put in place to combat the spread of COVID-19 have been rolled back and we are moving forward with a flexible, hybrid, work environment, while still being committed to a safe and healthy workplace.

We continue to adapt to the world around us while providing high-quality service to our customers and the people of Washington state.

2022 also saw the departure of Director Vikki Smith after a long and distinguished career in public service. She held many positions during her 51-year career at the Department of Revenue. Her energy and expertise were valuable assets to the agency and the many people she served, mentored, and coached over the years. While we will certainly miss her presence, we are committed to fostering and growing a culture that values both employees and customers, something she worked tirelessly on over the years.

Over the past year the agency has been hard at work bringing the Working Families Tax Credit (WFTC) program online to begin accepting applications on February 1, 2023. The WFTC is a refund of up to \$1,200 for low-to-moderate income individuals and families. This effort has drawn on resources from across the agency and represents a significant change to how DOR operates by adding families and individuals to our existing businesses customer base. We are excited to have the opportunity to give back to Washingtonians who need it the most.

I encourage you to read more about the good work our agency is doing. If you have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to contact me at [JohnR@dor.wa.gov](mailto:JohnR@dor.wa.gov). I welcome the feedback and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

John Ryser  
Acting Director, Department of Revenue

# Executive Team

## John Ryser, Acting Director

Acting Director John Ryser heads up the Washington State Department of Revenue. John has a long history with Revenue, starting his career in the Taxpayer Account Administration division and moving on to the Audit division. Prior to his current appointment he has served as the agency's Deputy Director, Senior Assistant Director of Operations, Senior Assistant Director of Tax Policy and as the Assistant Director of the Audit division. As the Acting Director, John oversees a staff of 1,386 employees and a biennial budget of \$631.6 million.



## Heidi Geathers, Acting Deputy Director

As the Acting Deputy Director, Heidi provides oversight for Information Services, ATLAS Management Program (AMP), Internal Audit, Enterprise Risk Management, and the Lean Transformation Office. Heidi has worked both in the private and public sectors. Before coming to state government, Heidi spent 20 years in the banking industry gaining a keen understanding of customer-centric ideals and practices which drove technology strategies that were implemented.



## Alyson Fouts, Senior Assistant Director of Operations

Alyson oversees the Audit, Compliance, Property Tax, Taxpayer Services, and Taxpayer Account Administration divisions. Alyson started her career with Revenue in 1990 in the Taxpayer Account Administration division and worked in several policy and operation roles including Assistant Director of Taxpayer Services.



## Gil Brewer, Senior Assistant Director of Tax Policy

Gil oversees the agency's Research & Fiscal Analysis, Interpretations & Technical Advice, Legislation & Policy, and Administrative Review & Hearings divisions, as well as the Tribal Partnerships Program. Gil is responsible for the overall development of Revenue's tax policy. Gil has worked for Revenue for more than 14 years and has held various positions, including Tax Policy Specialist, Legislative Liaison, and Assistant Director of the ITA division. He also has more than 15 years of prior policy-related work with governments in Maine, Hawaii and Micronesia.



## Steve McLain, Acting Senior Assistant Director for Administrative Services

As Acting Senior Assistant Director of Administrative Services, Steve oversees the agency's Human Resources and Business & Financial Services divisions, and the Information Governance Office. In his more than 39 years with state government, Steve spent the majority of his state career working in human resources-related roles. Since he came to Revenue, Steve has served as the Assistant Director of the Human Resources division.





## Agency responsibilities

As Washington state's primary tax collection agency, the Department of Revenue oversees more than 60 different taxes while collecting more than 93% of the state General Fund tax revenues. A total of \$38 billion in state and local taxes was collected in Fiscal Year 2022. The agency also processes 2.8 million tax returns a year from more than 631,000 businesses filing monthly, quarterly, or annually. It also processes more than 416,000 business license applications and renewals.

Other responsibilities include:

- Auditing businesses both in-state and out-of-state.
- Enforcing compliance with tax laws.
- Locating unregistered businesses.
- Providing taxpayer assistance, information, and education.
- Overseeing the administration of property tax.
- Managing the state's Unclaimed Property (UCP) program.

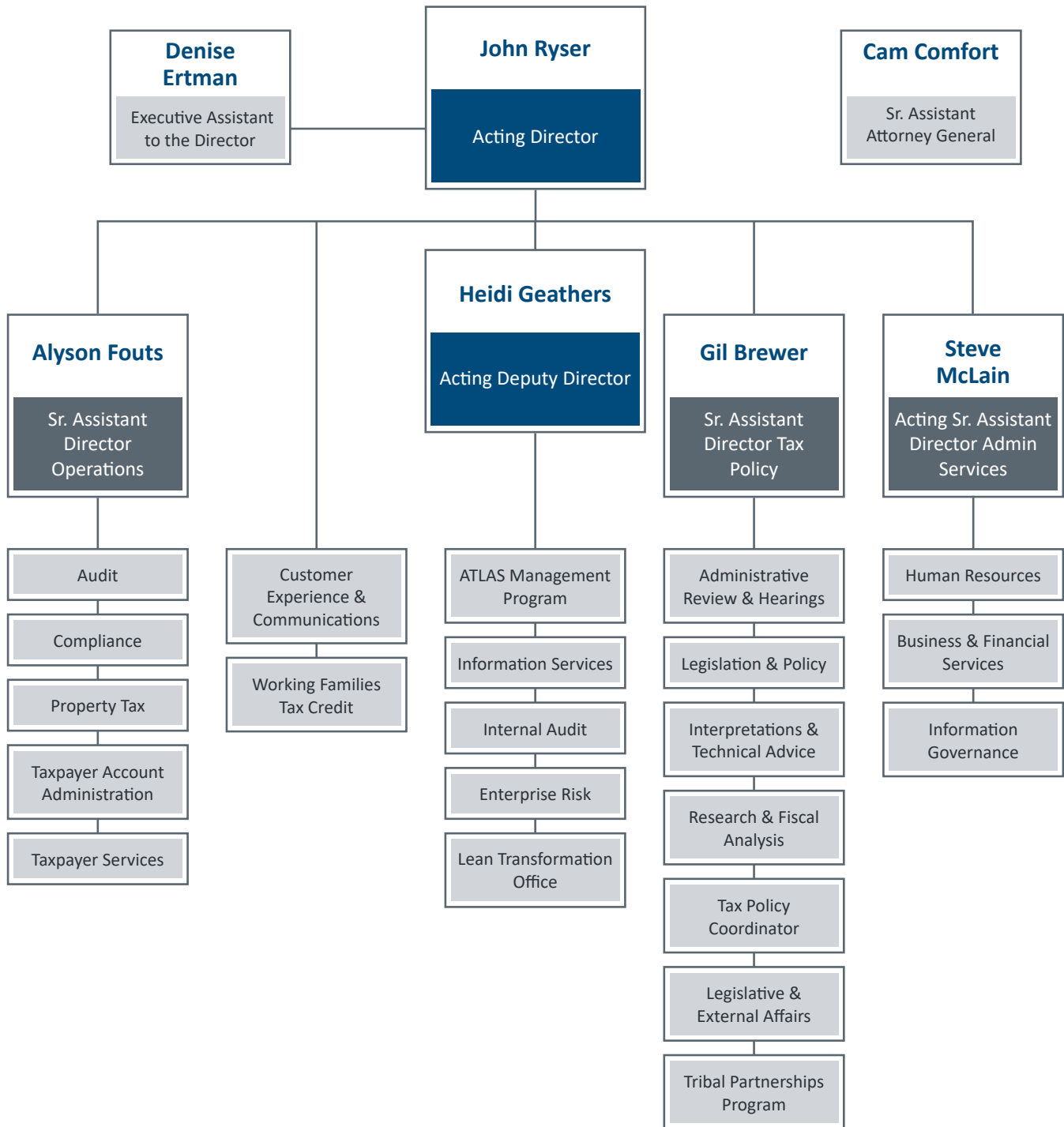


# Organizational Overview

## Serving Washington

The Department of Revenue's mission is to efficiently administer tax laws and public service programs with integrity. Headquartered in Tumwater, the agency has field offices statewide in Bellingham, Bothell, Kent, Port Angeles, Richland, Seattle, Spokane, Tacoma, Vancouver, Wenatchee, and Yakima. In addition, the Audit division has 55 out-of-state auditors located in 20 states. The agency's staff of over 1,300 includes a wide variety of positions such as lawyers, agents, examiners, analysts, appraisers, programmers, foresters, auditors, and support staff.

# Organizational Chart



# Agency Divisions

## Administrative Review & Hearings

**Core duties:** Conducting taxpayer-requested reviews involving tax assessment and refunds, and providing guidance on Washington tax laws.

## Audit

**Core duties:** Promoting voluntary compliance, performing audits, and working with taxpayers on accurate reporting.

## Business & Financial Services

**Core duties:** Providing administrative and financial services to the agency.

## Compliance

**Core duties:** Collecting tax revenues through tax discovery, taxpayer education, field office oversight, investigations, assessments and enforcement.

## Customer Experience & Communications

**Core duties:** Using data to improve customer experience, managing internal and external websites, and public relations.

## Executive

**Core duties:** Overseeing the implementation of the Governor's Executive Orders and Directives, legislative action, government-to-government relations, and statewide enterprise efforts.

## Human Resources

**Core duties:** Providing services to management, employees, and job seekers.

## Information Services

**Core duties:** Providing infrastructure, service support, and IT security.

## Interpretations & Technical Advice

**Core duties:** Developing guidance to ensure fair and consistent application of state tax law; providing policy analysis and technical advice.

## Legislation & Policy

**Core duties:** Supporting the Governor, Legislature, and the agency director in the evaluation of state and local tax programs and policies.

## Property Tax

**Core duties:** Overseeing the administration of property taxes at state and local levels; providing guidance to county assessors and appraising inter-county operating property.

## Research & Fiscal Analysis

**Core duties:** Supporting the Governor and the Legislature by compiling tax data, providing fiscal notes and estimates and analyzing tax and economic impacts of proposed legislation.

## Taxpayer Account Administration

**Core duties:** Administering tax and incentive programs by collecting, accounting for and distributing excise taxes and fees and administering the Uniform Unclaimed Property program.

## Taxpayer Services

**Core duties:** Managing statewide Business Licensing Services, in-bound call center, taxpayer service program, and taxpayer rights advocate.

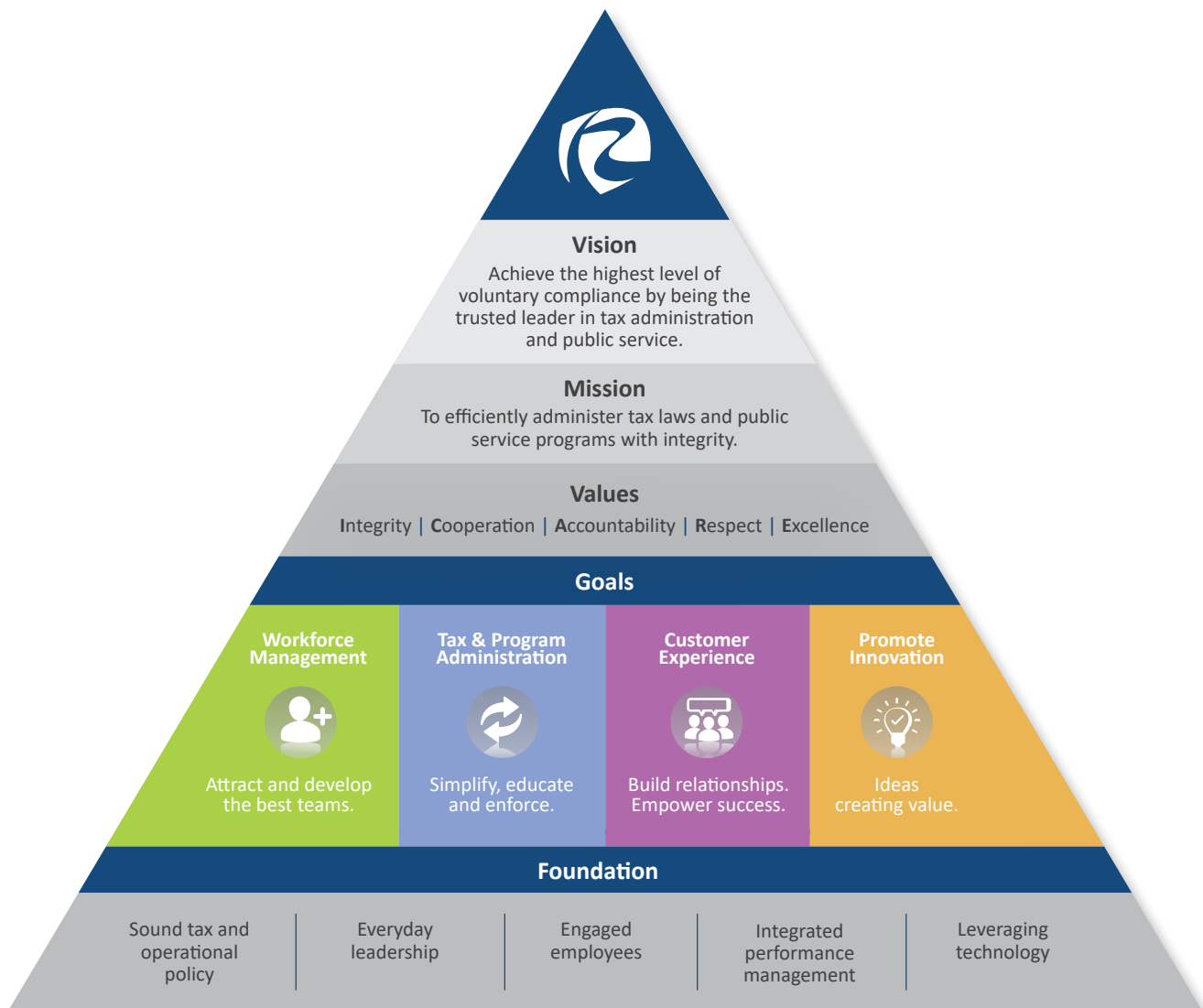
## Working Families Tax Credit

**Core duties:** Overseeing a credit program for low-to-moderate income individuals and families who meet eligibility requirements.



# Strategic Pyramid

The Strategic Pyramid communicates Revenue's vision, mission, values, and goals to both staff and customers. It establishes the expectations the agency strives to achieve and the foundational elements that will ensure success. This pyramid is also used to drive the agency strategic business planning process.



# Revenue at a Glance

## Revenue collected (FY22)

### State revenues (in billions):

Retail sales and use tax	\$15.0
Business and occupation	\$6.1
State property tax levy	\$4.5
Other state taxes	\$5.2

### Local revenues:

Retail sales and use tax	\$6.6
Other local revenues	\$0.6

**Total collections \$38.0**

## Reporting/active businesses

Active reporting (as of 7/1/2022):

Monthly	165,179
Quarterly	239,486
Annual	227,659

**Total 632,324**

Audits 3,983

Voluntary compliance 98.2%

## Tax Return Filings

Monthly	1,858,811
Quarterly	799,425
Annual	184,153

**Total 2,842,389**

## Staffing

FTEs 1,202.3

## Efficiencies

Cost per \$100 collected (FY22) 58¢

In the past 20 years, we've increased:

Revenue collected 190.3%

Registered businesses 12.2%

FTEs 19.5%

## Agency budget 2021-2023 biennial (in millions):

FY22	\$192.4
FY23	\$439.2*
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$631.6</b>

\*Increase in FY23 budget includes money allotted for Working Families Tax Credit payments.

## Tax revenue collected and what it provides

- \$15.0 billion — State retail sales and use tax
- \$6.6 billion — Local retail sales and use tax
- \$6.1 billion — Business and occupation tax
- \$5.2 billion — Other state taxes and fees
- \$4.5 billion — State share property tax
- \$0.6 billion — Other local taxes



## Customer service

<b>2.8 million</b> Filed returns	<b>96.7%</b> Returns filed online
<b>324,039</b> Phone calls	<b>25,125</b> Live chats
<b>9.9 million</b> Visits to dor.wa.gov	<b>416,474</b> Business license applications and renewals
<b>\$89.4 million</b> Unclaimed property returned to owners	<b>192,704</b> Unclaimed property refunds processed
<b>56</b> New business workshops (1,444 attendees)	

# Strategic Business Plan Shapes the Next Five Years

Revenue is always working to improve customer service and staff engagement while supporting agency goals. To guide those improvements, the agency relies on Strategic Business Plan (SBP) initiatives.

## Revenue's mission-critical goals:

- Workforce Management.
- Tax & Program Administration.
- Customer Experience.
- Promote Innovation.

Each of these goals has strategies that support it. Here are six SBP initiatives to support the strategies.

### 1. Develop business resource groups modeled after the statewide versions.

Supports the strategic priorities addressing current and future workforce needs and supporting a culture of diversity and inclusion.

Employee champions will work together to discuss strategies for making the workplace more inclusive and attractive to both diverse candidates and current employees.

### 2. Replace the Legislative Tracking System (LTS).

Supports the strategic priority to promote sound tax policy.

The LTS prepares, tracks, indexes, and stores legislative documents that contain vital information for decision makers. Replacing the LTS will benefit all divisions, allowing more timely and better collaboration before, during, and after legislative sessions.

### 3. Develop a data-driven outreach program to increase voluntary compliance.

Supports the strategic priority to increase voluntary compliance.

This initiative aims to design a program using data analytics to identify areas with low voluntary compliance and explore outreach to increase education. Voluntary compliance ensures it's easier for taxpayers to file and pay the right amount of taxes and is the most efficient form of tax collection.

### 4. Develop and implement a multilingual access plan.

Supports the strategic priorities to strengthen trust and accountability and reduce the burden on customers by considering their needs.

Revenue's customer base is expanding beyond businesses to include families and individuals. This initiative is focused on implementing Revenue's first Language Access Plan.

### 5. Explore additional payment options.

Supports the strategic priority to foster and support a culture of innovation.

Two efforts support this initiative:

- Consider a pre-paid card for tax credits and refunds.
- Explore the potential for accepting cryptocurrency for tax payments.

Pursuing these new transaction methods can help better meet the needs of customers in the coming years.

### 6. Modernize services by conducting a call center feasibility study.

Supports the strategic priority to enhance our administration through continuous improvement.

Modernizing service delivery options can enhance the customer experience, allow better visibility into call queues, provide options to switch agents to different program call centers during peak times, and improve overall communication.

# Working Families Tax Credit

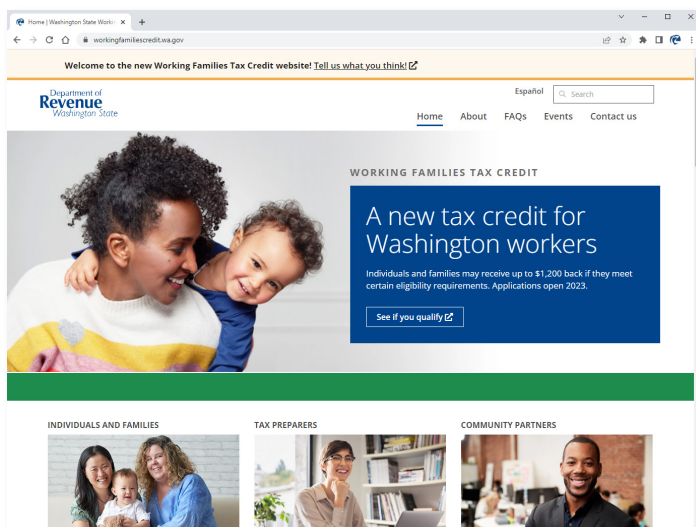
The Department of Revenue formed the Working Families Tax Credit (WFTC) division in 2021 to administer the WFTC program enacted by the Legislature. Starting in February 2023, the program will provide a refund of up to \$1,200 to low-to-moderate income individuals and families who meet certain eligibility requirements. It is anticipated that up to 400,000 individuals will be eligible for a refund.

## Creating an equitable program

To develop an equitable program, the WFTC division created an Outreach Advisory Committee to improve communication channels with individuals applying for the credit. This committee will help identify underserved communities, identify ways to increase awareness and access to the program, and suggest opportunities for improvement. This work is supported by the WFTC Outreach and Community Engagement Team.

## New website and marketing approach

The department created a new website dedicated to this program. The site, [WorkingFamiliesCredit.wa.gov](http://WorkingFamiliesCredit.wa.gov), launched in July 2022. The site is available in English and Spanish, with supplemental pages and materials



in 11 additional languages. It includes an eligibility checker, FAQs, and resources for individuals, tax preparers, and community partners.

**WORKING FAMILIES TAX CREDIT**

**A new tax credit for Washington workers starts in 2023!**

Working Families Tax Credit will provide payments up to \$1,200 to individuals and families who meet the requirements.

**Who is eligible for a tax credit?**  
Individuals and families are eligible if they meet all of the following requirements:

- Lived in Washington a minimum of 183 days.
- Are at least 25 and under 65 years of age OR have a qualifying child in 2022.
- Filed a 2022 federal tax return with a Social Security Number (SSN) or an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN).
- Eligible for the federal Earned Income Tax Credit on their 2022 tax return.
  - Go to [www.irs.gov/eitc](http://www.irs.gov/eitc) to learn more.
- Meet the income requirements (see table).

**What are the income thresholds?**

Number of qualifying children	Applicant must make less than the following		Maximum refund
	Single	Married (filing jointly)	
0	\$16,480	\$22,610	\$300
1	\$43,492	\$49,622	\$600
2	\$49,399	\$55,529	\$900
3 or more	\$53,057	\$59,187	\$1,200

**How much will individuals and families get back?**  
It depends on the number of qualifying children and income level. See table for estimates based on the 2022 income eligibility thresholds.

Applications open on February 1, 2023 and are accepted through December 31, 2023.

To access additional information or sign-up for updates, visit our website: [WorkingFamiliesCredit.wa.gov](http://WorkingFamiliesCredit.wa.gov) or call 360-763-7300.

Department of Revenue  
Washington State

“It is an honor to be part of this groundbreaking program for Washington. The WFTC will make a positive difference in the lives of so many. I am impressed by the talents and experiences of both agency staff and external partners who have rallied together for a successful implementation.”

– Kevin Dixon, Assistant Director, Working Families Tax Credit Division

# Multilingual Outreach Matters

For more than 30 years, Revenue has offered multilingual services to its customer base. With time comes experience, expansion, and evolution of these services. In addition to providing translation and interpretation services, Revenue is encouraging staff to spend more time with the communities it serves.

For instance, a new Outreach and Community Engagement Team was established for the Working Families Tax Credit (WFTC) program. All team members are bilingual in Spanish and serve different regions of the state.

Reducing barriers and addressing equity are cornerstones of the new program. The outreach team emphasizes connecting with individuals and families who may have trouble accessing critical information and services due to poverty, education, homelessness, race/ethnicity, language, immigration status, or disability status.



The WFTC Outreach Team, pictured (left to right): Perla Gamboa, Stephanie Elizalde, Raquel Rice, and Aminta Spencer

“Traditional methods of community outreach such as public meetings may be uncomfortable for some individuals, that’s why we need to engage local communities,” said Perla Gamboa, Revenue’s

outreach and community partnerships manager. “Our outreach team explores a variety of sources, such as existing social networks, to communicate with our audiences.”

Active listening also is part of the strategy. The team is identifying ways to receive feedback from community members while building relationships with volunteers, advocates, and community leaders.

“We want to understand their priorities and receive their input,” Perla said.

The team also is aiming to provide diverse ways to deliver and receive information, such as videos, radio interviews, flyers, brochures, and other nontraditional methods of communicating within specific communities.

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“I am excited about working with the team to continue to build and put processes in place to advance DOR’s equity mission.”

– Perla Gamboa, Outreach and Community Partnerships Manager, Working Families Tax Credit Division

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## Fiscal Year 2022 highlights

- Included a multilingual access plan as part of the agency’s Strategic Business Plan.
- Created the agency’s Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) team in response to Executive Order 22-04. This team will help support the work of multilingual outreach and access.

[claimyourcash.org](https://claimyourcash.org)

# Reuniting Washingtonians with their Unclaimed Property

The Department of Revenue administers the state's Unclaimed Property Program, a free service that reunites property and assets with their rightful owners.

Washington state law requires businesses and other organizations (called holders) to review their records each year to determine whether they hold any funds, securities, or other property that has remained unclaimed for the required abandonment period.

Holders file a report annually and transfer the property to the state. Property is usually considered unclaimed after three years, however that time varies based on the type of property.

Revenue acts as a custodian of the reported property indefinitely, until the owner or their heir(s) claims the property.

The most common types of unclaimed property include:

- Bank accounts.
- Insurance proceeds.
- Stocks, bonds, and mutual funds.
- Utility and phone company deposits.
- Customer credits.
- Uncashed checks – such as payroll, insurance payments, or travelers checks.
- Safe deposit box contents.

## In Fiscal Year 2022



\$89.4 million paid to claimants.



192,704 claims processed.



\$29.6 million recovered through audit, compliance, and outreach/education efforts.



\$246.5 million reported by holders.



858,000 visitors to [claimyourcash.org](https://claimyourcash.org).



4.7 million page views.



Adopted new Revised Uniform Unclaimed Property Act.

## Major change:

- Washington state passed Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5531 (RCW 63.30) which took effect on January 1, 2023.
  - Insurance companies will report unclaimed property annually, by April 30. All other businesses will continue to report their unclaimed property by October 31.
  - The abandonment period for state and local government is reduced from two years to one year.
  - There is a new schedule for mailing due diligence letters.

# Building Awareness for Unclaimed Property

To increase promotion of the Unclaimed Property (UCP) Program, Revenue hired an advertising agency. An integrated media strategy was created that included a mix of traditional, digital, and social media.

## The method

The materials developed for this campaign took a vibrant, fun, alliterative approach and included:

### Broadcast television and radio

- The campaign created awareness, inspired engagement, and urged actions online. Radio partnerships included a mix of paid ads as well as on-air DJ interviews. This past Seattle Mariners season, DOR aired ads which provided broad awareness and credibility with 27 million views.



### Digital and social media

- The campaign used a mix of digital display ads, as well as ads embedded in feeds that encouraged people to click through to check for unclaimed property of their own. On social media, a mix of ads were used to educate and create engagement.



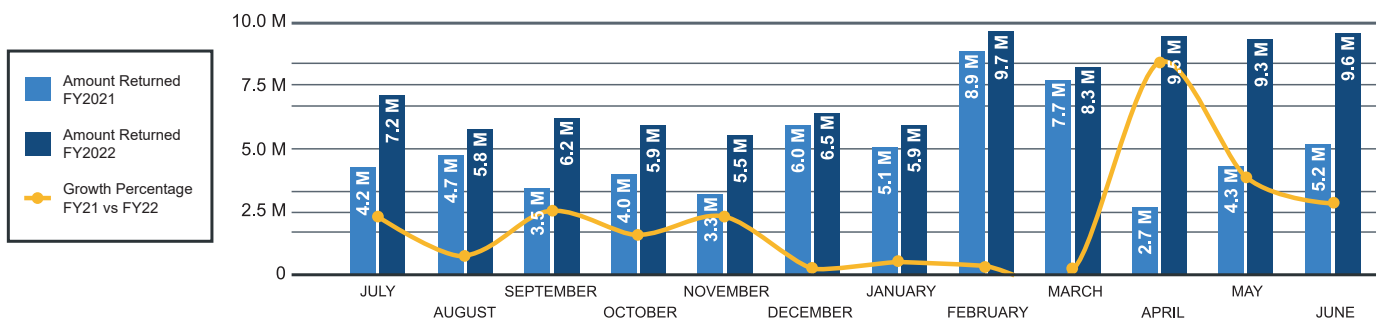
## The results

Revenue set up a real-time dashboard that pulled in metrics and analytics from Meta, Google, and other platforms to see the performance of the campaign—and continually optimized to improve results.

### In just the first two months of the campaign:

- 150,000 new users to the site – up 43% from previous 60 days.
- Month 1: 9,811 claims processed – up 40% from the previous year and \$9.3 million returned – up 116% from the previous year.
- Month 2: 11,031 claims processed – up 28% from the previous year and \$9.6 million returned – up 85% from the previous year.

## Amount Returned FY2021 vs. FY2022



# Tribal Collaboration

As a part of Revenue’s Executive division, the Tribal Partnerships Program manages Revenue’s government-to-government relations with the Tribes. The program also provides legal and policy support on tribal issues, handles present and future compacting, supports the agency in providing taxpayer education to those doing business in Indian Country, and educates agency staff on tribal cultural norms.

The program aims to assess agency positions on federal Indian law and statutes to resolve tribal tax and policy issues before they become a source of disagreement.

## Tribal fishing, hunting, and gathering tax exemption

After analyzing how tax policies affect the Tribes, the department made several changes to tax policy, including the Tribal Treaty Fishing Exemption. The Lummi Nation had asked for a Consultation to discuss the long-standing Treaty Fishing Exemption of sales tax on goods and services used in tribal fishing activities.

After research by the Tribal Partnerships Program and Consultation with the Tribes, Revenue discovered a state Supreme Court ruling from the 1980s that held there is no difference between the right to fish and the privilege to hunt and gather.



Clarifying the exemption would bring it in line with the Tribes’ tax-exempt status and provide much-needed guidance for retailers who were often confused about what goods and services qualified for the exemption. The clarified exemption went into effect April 1, 2022.



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“It didn’t take long for Revenue to realize that the exemption should be clarified to include sales of goods and services to tribal members and certain tribal organizations for hunting and gathering activities, as well as fishing.”

– David Duvall, Program Manager,  
Tribal Partnerships

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## Tribal Tax Advisory Group Provides Valuable Input

The Tribal Tax Advisory Group (TTAG) is the director's advisory group focused on addressing tribal and department concerns. TTAG has five subgroups, each with a specific focus: Minimal Burden; Cigarettes; Fishing, Hunting, and Gathering; Forms; and Nuts & Bolts (any issue not falling within the other issues).

These subgroups discuss and analyze issues with the goal of making recommendations to the entire TTAG for the agency's consideration. TTAG is co-chaired by Revenue's director and Jamestown S'Klallam Tribal Chairman, Ron W. Allen, and typically meets once per calendar quarter.

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“The Tribal Tax Advisory Group provides an opportunity for both the Tribes and the agency to discuss issues around taxation.”

– Kyle Iron Lightning, Tribal Liaison

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Feedback from TTAG and its subgroups has shaped agency processes, forms, policy positions, and future agency tribal education offerings. Revenue's Tribal Liaison Kyle Iron Lightning praised the efforts of the advisory group. “At the very least, discussions are had over tax issues in a forum where all can be heard,” Kyle said.

## Supporting the Legislature

By statute, Revenue provides non-partisan support to lawmakers. Legislation and Policy (L&P) helps the Governor's Office, Legislature, and other stakeholders draft bills, as well as provide feedback on technical and policy issues. Each year, L&P tracks and analyzes bills to understand the impact on the agency's tax, licensing, and public service programs.

Research and Fiscal Analysis (RFA) analyzes tax and economic impacts, coordinates fiscal notes, compiles data, and prepare fiscal estimates. RFA completes much of this work using tax and economic models that require annual updates.







### 2022 Legislative Session

Both pieces of Agency Request Legislation were successfully adopted into law:

**HB 2099** focused on improving the department's ability to administer taxes by giving additional clarity on the computation of interest as it relates to late penalties for delayed payments. Also, it extends the statute of limitations to prosecute certain tax crimes related to sales suppression software (Zappers) from four years to six years.

**HB 2096** clarified some ambiguous terms and definitions as it relates to the working families tax credit. These technical changes will help the agency as it implements and administers the tax credit.

### Key statistics for Fiscal Year 2022:

	<b>654</b>	Bills analyzed
	<b>605</b>	Amendments analyzed
	<b>32</b>	Constituent issues resolved
	<b>267</b>	Official OFM fiscal notes
	<b>81</b>	Draft fiscal notes
	<b>186</b>	Revenue estimates

# Revenue Brings Home Awards for Recruitment Video

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Revenue had many job openings, and attracting talent for open positions was becoming increasingly difficult. To combat this challenge, the department created a short recruitment video to entice potential job applicants to consider the Washington State Department of Revenue as an employer of choice and increase the number of job applicants.

## Intent

The goal of the recruitment video was to showcase the many reasons to work for the department such as work/life balance, positive culture, diversity, a commitment to continuous improvement, ability to promote, flexibility, generous paid time off and a defined retirement benefit.

Lance Proctor, a member of the Human Resources recruitment team who appeared in the video shared that his involvement in the video's production meant a lot to him.

"What is more important than the work we do and more valuable than the benefits we provide is the people who work here. This agency has a lot to offer, but its greatest asset is, and always has been, its people. This video really made you feel that," Lance said.

## Production

The production of the video was led by Revenue's Customer Experience and Communications (CEC) division. They worked closely with the recruiting team in Human Resources (HR) to brainstorm concepts for the video that would catch potential employees' attention and encourage them to apply. They collaborated with an outside vendor on all pieces of this project, including script writing, filming, editing, and production.

"Regularly, I get to brag about this agency and the important work we do."

– Lance Proctor, Senior Staffing Consultant, Human Resources Division



Frame shot of Sandy Herrera, Warehouse Operator, in DOR recruitment video.

## Outcome

The video launched in November 2021 and was posted to the Careers page of the DOR website, linked to every recruitment announcement, and posted to Revenue's social media pages. It has been viewed more than 6,000 times.

Revenue won both a national award from the Federation of Tax Administrators (FTA) and a statewide award from the Public Relations Society of America – Puget Sound Chapter.

# Revenue Leader Wins Award for Legislative Action to Support Tribal Relations

Revenue’s Senior Assistant Director of Tax Policy, Gil Brewer, was honored as a 2021 recipient of the Governor’s Award for Leadership in Management (GLIM).

Created in 1985, the GLIM award honors state government managers who demonstrate excellent performance.

Gil oversees the agency’s Research & Fiscal Analysis, Interpretations & Technical Advice, Legislation & Policy, and Administrative Review & Hearings divisions, as well as the Tribal Partnerships Program. Gil is responsible for the overall development of Revenue’s tax policy.



Pictured: Gil Brewer, Senior Assistant Director of Tax Policy

During Washington’s 2020 Legislative Session, Gil served as the acting legislative liaison in addition to his regular job duties. He spearheaded agency-request legislation on behalf of the Governor’s Office that would dramatically alter tax collection for Tribes in Washington.

The legislation allowed Tribes to enter into compacts with the state to receive a portion of the sales tax revenue generated from sales between non-tribal members on tribal land. This legislation was a historic step toward ending years of litigation between the state and the Tribes, introducing a new era of

revenue sharing to support economic development statewide.

Due in large part to Gil’s advocacy, the bill was passed and signed into law by Governor Jay Inslee in 2020.

Revenue’s Director at the time, Vikki Smith, wrote about Gil’s accomplishments and congratulated him on his award.

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“The agency depends on Gil’s comprehensive knowledge and extensive experience to guide our consequential decisions in our efforts to implement sound tax policy.”

– Vikki Smith, Former Director

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“He is committed to the department and to the success of our employees. We are lucky Gil chooses to be part of the Revenue team,” Vikki said.

A selection committee that comprises agency directors and executive staff chose the winners.

“I’m not a big one for awards generally, but it’s very special when you are nominated by your coworkers, who have seen your work on a daily basis and are all too familiar with your challenges, as well as your strengths,” Gil said. “I am proud to accept this award on behalf of the entire Tax Policy team, whose incredible efforts make a difference every day!”



**It starts  
with us**



## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Revenue

The Department of Revenue's diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts align with its core values of integrity, cooperation, accountability, respect, and excellence.

Division representatives on the agency's Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Committee (IDEC) offer DEI information and resources in the agency's weekly newsletter and intranet website. Additionally, IDEC discusses valuable DEI strategies to enhance Revenue's culture of respect and inclusion.

### **Disability Inclusion Network (DIN) Respect, Acceptance, and Dignity of persons with Disabilities (RADD) awards**

This year, Revenue was nominated and won the Respect, Acceptance, and Dignity of persons with Disabilities (RADD) award.

Lance Proctor, DOR HR Consultant and member of the IDEC committee, shared why he chose to nominate our agency.

"This (nomination) was to not only honor my agency for consistently putting in sincere effort to work on our culture every day but also to honor all the culture agents who bring so much of their selves to our work home and continue to improve our environment," Lance said.

Revenue was recognized for exceeding the Governor's goal of 5% persons with disabilities in the workforce. As of May 2021, 5.2% of Revenue employees identify as having a disability, up from 3.4% in May 2020.

### **Disability demographics increased due to a number of factors, including:**

- Educating current employees about disability status and how to self report.
- Attracting more talent from communities of people with disabilities.
- Appointing the agency's first-ever DIN representative.
- Updating hiring processes to include Mitigating Implicit Bias classes.
- Improving the accessibility of Revenue's careers page and job announcements.
- Consulting with Revenue's Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Committee along the way.



Pictured: Lance Proctor and Bryanna Rose, Human Resources

"I may have cited a lot of data to measure our milestones as we worked to improve our workforce demographics, but the real measure of who we are has been the collected efforts of wonderful human beings who helped create a workplace where all of our employees are valued and celebrated," Lance said.

# Think Lean!

## Continuous Improvement is Part of the Culture

Revenue regularly refines its efforts to better serve the public using a variety of methods, including Lean, a continuous improvement program, and data-driven decision making. The agency has dedicated management and staff to steer these improvement efforts.

### Improvement in action: Estate Tax returns

A cross agency team, led by the Estate Tax team in the Audit Division, implemented several improvements in their estate tax return review and closeout process that resulted in enhanced customer experience:

- Reduced the overall process time by 37 days, meaning customers' returns are accepted quicker.
- Created an estate tax Excel spreadsheet to help customers calculate taxes.

Revenue's Estate Tax team examines approximately 2,000 estate tax returns each year to ensure accurate reporting on estates that exceed \$2.193 million. After improvements, 73% of estate tax return inventory is less than 9 months old – a 66% decrease in aged inventory.

These improvements also allowed the team to focus on implementing an audit selection process to reduce the overall workload for the team and to implement the program's first electronic return in My DOR.

## Lean Belt certifications

Revenue has a thriving Lean Belt program to include training for Yellow Belts, Green Belts, and Leadership Belts. Employees who earn Lean belts join the agency's Lean Community of Practice, which meets quarterly to share tools and knowledge.



**New Yellow Belts: 22**  
**Total Yellow Belts: 67**



**Current Green Belts: 16**  
**New Green Belt Training Participants: 12\***



**New Lean Leadership Belts: 8\***

\*Up-and-coming Green Belts will facilitate six process improvement projects in FY2023.

\*The Lean Leadership Belt is earned when employees attend problem solving, leadership and change management training and use their skills to further develop Revenue's Lean culture.

## Data-Driven Decisions

In 2021, the agency created a maturity model for data-driven decisions. In 2022, the agency assessed this model, identified strengths and gaps, and created actions to further develop the agency's maturity.

To fill these gaps and reinforce strengths, staff are developing agency-specific training based on roles.

Communities of practice for data analysts and decision makers have also been developed to enhance knowledge, skills, and abilities.

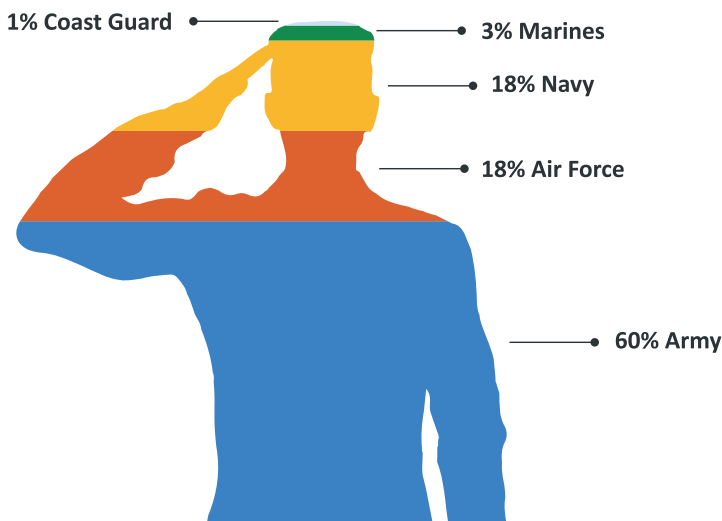
Additionally, the agency is reinvigorating its performance measurement processes, with a goal of enhancing efficiency, effectiveness, and usefulness.



# Service Means More at Revenue

Military members make up 7.5% of Revenue’s 1,247 employees. Out of this year’s 205 new hires, 14.1% were veterans. To support these employees, the agency has an internal Veterans Employment Team (VET) employee resource group.

The DOR VET team is regarded as one of the most active and robust internal veterans’ resource groups in Washington state government.



“I can proudly say, even with this year’s challenges, Revenue’s VET continues to strengthen and provide a welcoming environment for veterans, spouses, and advocates” said Patrick Sutton, staffing consultant and VET member. “Our mission is simple – recruit, retain, and recognize veterans and spouses.”



During the COVID-19 pandemic, with most employees working from home, the VET team continued to

support agency veterans by sharing resources, hosting virtual monthly meetings, and providing open availability. They have also continued to honor the service branch birthdays, as well as Veterans Day and Memorial Day, through a video series published agencywide.



“Revenue is an organization that instills the confidence needed to excel outside the military,” said Patrick. “We look forward to FY23 and the opportunities it brings.”

## Recognition and paying it forward

For the seventh year in a row, the statewide YesVets campaign recognized Revenue for its efforts in helping veterans find and maintain employment. To demonstrate that annual accomplishment, a YesVets decal is proudly displayed on entry doors of agency office buildings to serve as a welcome mat for veterans.

The VET team believes in giving back. For the past four years, the VET team has organized a March Madness fundraiser to benefit Puget Sound Honor Flight. This local nonprofit chapter transports veterans who served in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War back to Washington, D.C. for “one last mission” – to visit and reflect at the memorials built in their honor. Revenue’s running total for donations is \$4,736.





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