



# Municipality of Anchorage

Suzanne LaFrance, Mayor

## **Tools to be Timely**

Penalties mandated by Anchorage Municipal Code (AMC) Chapter 12.20, Room Tax, can at times be significant, but they are avoidable. Below are some practices and strategies that will be useful to an Operator who wishes to avoid the late file and/or late pay penalties.

1. **Be aware of the critical dates.** Regular due dates for tax return and remittance are 30 days after the end of the calendar quarter being reported (AMC 12.20.050). 8% late file and 8% late pay penalties are assessed the 8<sup>th</sup> day after due date (AMC 12.20.110). Treasury is required to provide notification to the taxpayer of penalties incurred and to be incurred on the 8<sup>th</sup> day after due date (AMC 12.20.110). Additional 25% late file and 25% late pay penalties will be assessed on the 16<sup>th</sup> day after due date (AMC 12.20.110).
2. **Have a contingency plan.** For example, have multiple people schedule the event in Microsoft Outlook, smartphones, or a similar calendar system in case of an unexpected absence by the tax return preparer or other individuals involved in tax return preparation, issuance of the remittance check, and mailing.
3. **Schedule Outlook to send e-mails to key persons to remind them to complete and mail the tax return.** If you are using MS Outlook, to schedule the delayed delivery of an e-mail, click on the "Options" tab, go to the "More Options" group and click on "Delay Delivery". Then, enter a date and time for delivery in the "Delivery Options" section. Outlook will send the e-mail to the recipient(s) on the prescribed day at the prescribed time
4. **Allow adequate time for delivery of return/remittance to Treasury Division.** The closer to the due date you wait before mailing, the greater the risk that your tax return and tax remittance will be late. Avoid delaying mailing a completed tax return and remittance until immediately prior to the due date. Penalties mandated by code do not distinguish between an innocent mistake and an intentional failure to file/remit.
5. **Confirm your actions. Verify the tax remittance cleared your bank account by the due date.** For example, use on-line banking to track check clearing, or call Treasury personnel (343-6670) to confirm receipt of your tax return and remittance.
6. **Use certified mail or a third-party service such as FedEx or UPS.** These methods ensure that your document package is traceable and minimize the risk that it will be permanently "lost" by the service provider. Be certain to use the correct mailing address, located in the top right corner of the tax return. The Treasury Division will recognize a U.S. Postal Service post mark with a date on or before the due date as evidence of timely filing/remittance but will not recognize an office postage meter mark/strip as such evidence.
7. **E-File and Pay at the same time.** In order to avoid separate filing and payment penalties and accrued interest, pay when you submit your return. Paying later could lead to a forgotten payment which will incur penalties and interest.