



**Illinois Department of Revenue**

**Implementation Guide for  
Direct Electronic Filing of  
*Telecommunications Returns***

**October 2021**

# Overview

The Illinois Department of Revenue (IDOR) electronic filing program can accept and acknowledge the following:

- **RT-2, Telecommunications Tax Return**, and supporting schedules; and
- **RT-2-X, Amended Telecommunications Tax Return**, and supporting schedules.

## Direct File Program

Using an HttpsPost Utility Program, telecommunications tax returns and schedules are transferred to the gateway server of the Illinois Department of Revenue (IDOR) via the Internet, using Secure Socket Layer technology. File specifications must be used, and the files must be formatted as text files using the ASCII character set.

All applicants must agree to comply with all of the requirements and specifications set forth by IDOR in this implementation guide and in [86 Illinois Administrative Code Part 750](#), Payment of Taxes by Electronic Funds Transfer, and [86 Illinois Administrative Code Part 760](#), Electronic Filing of Returns or Other Documents. In addition, all applicants, including those who develop software, must successfully complete testing.

**Note:** The information contained in this publication does not represent a binding position of the Department, may not be cited as legal authority, and creates no rights under the Taxpayers' Bill of Rights Act.

## What is an electronically filed return?

An electronically filed return or schedule consists of data transmitted or provided to IDOR by electronic means. In total, electronic returns and schedules contain the same information as traditionally filed paper documents. We will accept:

- **RT-2, Telecommunications Tax Return;**
- **RT-2-X, Amended Telecommunications Tax Return;** and
- the following supporting schedule:
  - **RT-2-M, Telecommunications Tax Schedule.**

All returns/schedules must be transmitted within a single file via electronic data transfer and must include an electronic signature. See **Electronic Signatures** on page 6 below.

The following paper documents contain information that cannot be provided electronically and must be mailed:

- Copies of schedules, invoices, and bills of lading requested for verification purposes;
- Returns and payments that are made in protest in accordance with Section 2a.1 of the State Officers and Employees Money Disposition Act (30 ILCS 230/2a.1), which requires the corresponding notice to be mailed to IDOR (See **How to file a protested return electronically** on page 10 below.); and
- Changes of address, which must be sent to IDOR using [Form REG-3-C, Business Information Update](#). See **How to change your address** on page 11 below.

## Am I required to file and pay electronically?

### Mandatory Electronic Filing

Taxpayers who have a combined average monthly liability of \$1,000 or more for the immediate preceding calendar year under the Telecommunications Excise Tax Act and the Simplified Municipal Telecommunications Tax Act are required to file their returns electronically via electronic data transfer. IDOR will notify you if you are required to file your returns electronically.

### Mandatory Electronic Payments

Taxpayers who have a combined average monthly liability of \$1,000 or more for the immediate preceding calendar year under the Telecommunications Excise Tax Act and the Simplified Municipal Telecommunications Tax Act are required to make all return payments by electronic means.

In addition, taxpayers who have a combined average monthly liability of \$25,000 or more under the Telecommunications Excise Tax Act and the Simplified Municipal Telecommunications Tax Act are required to make four quarter-monthly accelerated payments by electronic means.

IDOR will notify you if you are required to make your payments by electronic means.

### Voluntary Electronic Filing and Payments

Taxpayers who are not required to file electronically may also participate in this program. If you elect to file your return electronically, you must also make your return payment by electronic means.

## **When is my electronic payment due?**

The due date for an electronic payment is the same as a paper-based payment. When the due date falls on a weekend or a holiday observed by the State of Illinois, the due date for your payment will be the next business day. Taxpayers are responsible for timely initiating payments to ensure the funds are available to IDOR on the date the payment is due. Because it may take one or more business days for a payment to reach us, taxpayers should initiate a payment prior to or on the last business day before the actual due date.

## **When is my electronic return due?**

The due date for an electronic return is identical to that of a paper-based return. When the due date for filing a return with IDOR falls on a weekend or a holiday observed by the State of Illinois, the due date for your return will be the next business day. Electronic filers are responsible for timely initiating the transmission to ensure the return is received and acknowledged as accepted by IDOR on the due date.

The receipt date of the electronic return will be when the transmission ends, for participants transmitting directly to IDOR, provided the return is acknowledged as accepted.

**Note regarding due dates for electronic returns and payments:** The provisions of Section 1.25 of the Statute on Statutes (5 ILCS 70/1.25), asserting that returns and payments transmitted through the U.S. mail are deemed filed with or received by the State on the date shown by the post office cancellation mark stamped upon the envelope or other wrapper containing it, do not apply to returns filed by electronic means as those returns are not transmitted by mail.

## ***Electronic Payment Information***

Telecommunications taxpayers who electronically file returns with IDOR must make all required return payments by electronic means. In addition, taxpayers who have a combined average monthly liability of \$25,000 or more under the Telecommunications Excise Tax Act and the Simplified Municipal Telecommunications Tax Act are required to make four quarter-monthly accelerated payments by electronic means. Electronic payment options include:

**Option 1:** Debit authorization included with an electronic return.

This option allows taxpayers to pay by including payment information in the return data. Taxpayers need to supply their name, phone number, routing number, bank account number, payment amount, requested settlement date, and tax type within the return filing. Payment information is “warehoused” internally by IDOR until the requested settlement date.

**Option 2:** Debit authorization using IDOR’s MyTax Illinois.

This option allows taxpayers to pay independent of the electronic return filing by using the Department’s existing MyTax Illinois system. Information regarding MyTax Illinois can be found at [tax.illinois.gov](http://tax.illinois.gov).

**Option 3:** ACH Credit

This option allows taxpayers to pay independent of the electronic return filing by contacting their financial institution each time they want to start a payment. Taxpayers who wish to pay by electronic means using the ACH Credit option must preregister at [MyTax.Illinois.gov](http://MyTax.Illinois.gov). Under the Additional Services heading, click the “Request ACH Credit Banking Instructions”.

**Option 4:** Debit authorization using IDOR’s Phone System

This option allows taxpayers to pay independent of the electronic return filing by using the existing EFT System and requires a toll-free phone call to the system each time you want to start a debit payment. Detailed instructions on using the debit option of the EFT System are provided after [Form EFT-1, Authorization Agreement for Certain Electronic Payments](#), is submitted and processed.

## ***Ways to Participate in Electronic Filing***

Electronic filers can perform themselves all of the functions associated with this electronic filing program, or they can use the services of another accepted electronic filer (third party) to participate in the electronic filing program. For example, a participant can be a:

- taxpayer who prepares the electronic return or other document and transmits it directly or otherwise provides it to IDOR using software developed by the taxpayer or a commercial software provider;
- taxpayer who uses the services of a service group or other third party to prepare the electronic return or other document and transmits it or otherwise provides it to IDOR;
- third-party transmitter who takes prepared returns from taxpayers or service groups and transmits them to IDOR directly;
- service group or other third party who prepares electronic returns or other documents and transmits them to IDOR directly; or
- software developer who develops software to
  - format return information to conform with IDOR specifications; and/or
  - transmit to IDOR directly or provide electronic returns to IDOR.

Taxpayers who use service groups or other third parties or agents to electronically file returns or schedules under this program remain responsible for completing their own registration.

# ***Application and Registration for Electronic Filing***

All participants must be registered to be accepted into the telecommunications tax return electronic filing program. This includes taxpayers, service groups or bureaus, software developers, and any participant who is transmitting directly to IDOR (either for themselves or for others).

To register, complete and sign [Form IL-8633-B, Business Electronic Filing Enrollment](#).

Email to: [Rev.IL8633B@illinois.gov](mailto:Rev.IL8633B@illinois.gov)

Mail to: **ELECTRONIC COMMERCE DIVISION  
ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE  
PO BOX 19479  
SPRINGFIELD IL 62794-9479**

Or fax to: **217 782-7992**

Taxpayers who use service groups or agents to file returns or other documents electronically remain responsible for completing their own registration. Service groups or other third parties or agents cannot complete or sign the enrollment form on behalf of a taxpayer.

Upon acceptance into the program, participants who transmit directly to IDOR via electronic data transmission will be assigned a logon identification (LID) number, a “test” password, and a “production” password. The LID number and passwords are unique for each transmitter and cannot be transferred among participants. The passwords must be kept secure. To access our communications processor, all transmitters must use their LID number and either the test password or the production password.

All electronic filers must successfully complete testing before they will be accepted into the program. Upon successful testing, direct transmitters will receive a production password. We will provide notification of the LID number and test password and instructions about how to receive a production password.

Participants must submit a revised Form IL-8633-B to IDOR to update the information contained on their most current enrollment form when there are changes involving:

- the taxpayer’s name, the firm name, or doing business as (DBA) name;
- any address, telephone number, or contact representative;
- Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN), Account ID, or license number;
- the electronic filing functions performed; or
- the taxpayer’s or responsible party’s electronic signature.

For questions regarding electronic filing enrollment (Form IL-8633-B), contact:

**ELECTRONIC COMMERCE DIVISION  
ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE  
PO BOX 19479  
SPRINGFIELD IL 62794-9479  
217 524-4767 or 866 440-8680  
[Rev.IL8633B@illinois.gov](mailto:Rev.IL8633B@illinois.gov)**

# Electronic Signatures

All returns filed via electronic data transfer must include an electronic signature that authenticates the taxpayer. Taxpayers must identify their electronic signatures on their electronic filing enrollment forms. The taxpayer, authorized officer, or other individual responsible for filing returns or other documents must also sign the electronic filing enrollment form.

The taxpayer's electronic signature is to be used in lieu of a written signature when filing electronic returns, forms, or other documents with IDOR. The effect of including a valid electronic signature as part of a return transmission has the same legal effect as the taxpayer having signed the returns or other documents.

A return filed via electronic data transfer will be considered unsigned unless the taxpayer's electronic signature is included, and received by IDOR, as part of that transmission.

An electronic signature is considered valid from the time it is registered by IDOR until it expires, unless:

- IDOR receives a written request from the taxpayer to have that taxpayer's electronic signature invalidated. To resume electronic filing, the taxpayer must submit a revised [Form IL-8633-B, Business Electronic Filing Enrollment](#), and identify a new electronic signature.
- The taxpayer submits a revised Form IL-8633-B and has identified a new electronic signature on that form.
- The taxpayer notifies IDOR that the electronic signature has been compromised. To resume electronic filing, the taxpayer must submit a revised Form IL-8633-B and identify a new electronic signature.
- The taxpayer's signature authorization has been revoked or suspended.

In addition, for electronic returns and other documents authorized to be filed under this program, a registered electronic signature is valid until the expiration of the corresponding certificate of registration or other certification issued by IDOR to the taxpayer. At that time, the taxpayer must either reconfirm the electronic signature previously selected or select a new electronic signature. Upon the expiration of the taxpayer's electronic signature, any electronically transmitted return and other documents containing the expired code will be considered unsigned.

# Acknowledgments

## Electronic Data Transfer

IDOR will create an acknowledgment (ACK) record for each return filed via electronic data transmission. Each ACK record will indicate one of the following:

- Accepted
- Accepted with errors
- Rejected
- Transmission rejection

Returns that are accepted with errors will be processed as filed. However, for returns that are rejected for any reason, a corrected file containing the returns and associated headers and trailers must be transmitted. See **“When is my electronic return due?”** on page 3 above.

When a transmission rejection is returned via the acknowledgment file, the entire transmission must be retransmitted after corrections are made. None of these returns are considered filed or accepted.

# Responsibilities

## Electronic Filers

All electronic filers must comply with all of the requirements and specifications set forth by IDOR in this implementation guide and [86 Illinois Administrative Code Part 750](#) and [86 Illinois Administrative Code Part 760](#) and must keep records equivalent to the level of detail contained in an acceptable paper record. See [86 Illinois Administrative Code 420.90](#).

### **Also, electronic filers must . . .**

- ensure that electronic returns or other electronic documents are filed with IDOR in a timely manner (see **When is my electronic return due?** on page 3 above);
- include both return and/or schedule data and electronic signature in the same file;
- ensure their own security and confidentiality of all transmitted data;
- make transmissions and retrieve acknowledgments in a timely manner (Acknowledgment records for returns filed via electronic data transfer will normally be available from IDOR within 24 hours after the transmission is received. **Note: It is important for electronic filers to review the acknowledgment records to ensure their returns were filed or to modify rejected returns and retransmit.**);
- match acknowledgment records to the original transmission files (Returns acknowledged as accepted with a detailed acknowledgment from IDOR will be considered filed returns. Returns acknowledged as rejected must be corrected and retransmitted, if possible. If the return cannot be retransmitted contact the Sales Tax Processing Division for resolution.);
- immediately contact the Electronic Commerce Division if an acknowledgment record has not been available after 36 hours from the transmission of the return; and
- contact the Electronic Commerce Division for assistance if returns have been rejected after three attempts or if acknowledgments are received for returns that were not in the original transmissions.

### **Also, electronic filers must *not* . . .**

- use software that has an assigned production password built into the software; or
- recall or intercept electronically filed returns or other documents after they have been acknowledged as accepted in a detailed acknowledgment record sent from IDOR. (If the taxpayer wishes to amend any accepted electronically filed return, an amended return must be electronically filed with IDOR. See **How to file an amended return electronically** on page 9 below.)

## Taxpayers

Taxpayers are responsible for retaining copies of all the acknowledgment records received from IDOR or third-party transmitters. These may be retained on magnetic media. Taxpayers must retain all copies of the acknowledgment files received from IDOR for as long as the taxpayer would be required to keep tax records in a paper format.



## Electronic filers who provide transmission services

Electronic filers who provide transmission services to other electronic filers must:

- accept electronic returns or other documents for transmission to IDOR only from electronic filers accepted in this program;
- provide each of their clients with the acknowledgment records for their transmissions within 24 hours after the availability of the acknowledgment from IDOR; and
- retain copies of all acknowledgment records received from IDOR for one year from the date of receipt.

Copies of acknowledgment records may be retained on magnetic media.

## Electronic filers who are software developers

Electronic filers who are software developers must:

- correct any software errors quickly to ensure timely transmission of electronic returns or other documents;
- expeditiously distribute any corrections to all electronic filers utilizing their software; and
- not incorporate into its software an IDOR-assigned production password.

## *Monitoring and Suspension*

IDOR monitors the quality of electronic transmissions. If the quality is unacceptable, IDOR will contact the electronic filer, software developer, or transmitter. IDOR also monitors complaints about electronic filers and issues warning or suspension letters as appropriate. IDOR reserves the right to suspend the electronic filing privilege of any electronic filer, software developer, or transmitter who varies from the requirements, specifications, and procedures stated in this guide or [86 Illinois Administrative Code Part 750](#) and [86 Illinois Administrative Code Part 760](#) or who does not consistently transmit error-free returns. When suspended, the electronic filer, software developer, or transmitter will be advised of the requirements for reinstatement into the program.

# ***General Information***

## **How to file an amended return electronically**

- 1) Correct the errors in the return you sent to us originally by doing the following:
  - a) Replace invalid license number, tax period, or date fields that are in error with the correct information. (You can replace the information with the correct data, but you cannot blank it out.)
  - b) Replace any other field in error with the correct information — or if it is a numeric field and should have been blank, zero fill.
  - c) Delete any records that should not have been sent the first time.
  - d) Add any records that were left out the first time.
- 2) Put a “1” in the “AMENDED?” field of the electronic tax return record.

**Note:** You must put the “1” into the “AMENDED?” field when you file an amended return electronically. If you leave the “1” out, the system will add the new return to the existing returns you sent in error instead of replacing the information that was wrong.
- 3) File the entire corrected file electronically.

## How to file a protested return electronically

- 1) Send the appropriate legal documentation to:

**REVENUE ACCOUNTING DIVISION — MC 2-231  
ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE  
101 W JEFFERSON ST  
SPRINGFIELD IL 62702**

- 2) Be sure the documentation you send to the Revenue Accounting Division includes the license number, the tax period, and the dollar amount being protested.
- 3) Submit the electronic return and schedules file to IDOR as you would normally.

## How to change your address

- 1) Complete [Form REG-3-C, Business Information Update](#), and send it to our Central Registration Division. Mail or fax a copy of the completed form to:

**CENTRAL REGISTRATION DIVISION  
ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF  
REVENUE PO BOX 19030  
SPRINGFIELD IL 62794-9030**

Fax: **217 785-6013**

- 2) Put a "1" into the "ADDRESS CHANGE?" field in the electronic return record.
- 3) Submit the return and schedules file to IDOR as you would normally.

## **How to electronically file a final return**

- 1) Put a "1" into the "FINAL RETURN?" field in the return record.
- 2) Submit the return and schedules file to IDOR as you would normally.

# ***Who to Contact with Questions or Problems***

General questions regarding telecommunications tax returns:

Sales Tax Processing  
Division **217 782-7517**  
[rev.excisetaxefp@illinois.gov](mailto:rev.excisetaxefp@illinois.gov)

Questions regarding record layout and acknowledgement:

Electronic Commerce Division  
**217 524-4767** or **866 440-8680**  
[rev.excisetaxefp@illinois.gov](mailto:rev.excisetaxefp@illinois.gov)

Technical Questions or system failures — regarding communications using the “Illinois Gateway”:

Electronic Commerce Support  
[Rev.ECSTech@illinois.gov](mailto:Rev.ECSTech@illinois.gov)

In order to serve you better, please include “Illinois Gateway questions” in the subject line of the email.

## Communications Information

The HttpsPost Utility Program transfers files to and from the Illinois Department of Revenue's Gateway server via the Internet using Secure Socket Layer (SSL) technology. The utility runs as a stand-alone application. The utility supports both a graphical user interface (GUI) mode of operation, as well as a command line mode suitable for batch processing.

Installation consists of copying the executable file, HttpsPost.exe, to an empty directory or folder. For convenience in launching the application in its GUI mode, place shortcuts to the executable on the desktop or in the START menu. Simply launching the executable without command line arguments starts the application in its GUI mode.

You can download a free copy of this utility program at [tax.illinois.gov/ElectronicServices/HttpsPost.exe](http://tax.illinois.gov/ElectronicServices/HttpsPost.exe) and its complete instructions and documentation at [tax.illinois.gov/ElectronicServices/HttpsPost.pdf](http://tax.illinois.gov/ElectronicServices/HttpsPost.pdf). You may also use your own program for transmitting files if you choose.

## Record Layout Formatting

### Record Ordering

Each file you submit must follow the prescribed ordering scheme. The first record for each return in the transmission file must be a header record, followed immediately by the return record. Schedule records then follow the return record and should be in sequential order. The last record must be the end of file record. Transmission files that are not properly ordered may be rejected.

### Account ID and License Numbers

You must enter the entire account ID or license number, excluding special characters, such as hyphens, slashes, or dashes, and with no embedded spaces. Please left justify, right space fill. Include leading zeros, if they are part of the number.

**Examples:** Account ID 1234-5678, the field should have "12345678"  
License number T-01234, the field should have "T01234 "

### Municipality/County Code

You must enter the entire municipality/county code, excluding special characters, such as hyphens, slashes, or dashes, and with no embedded spaces. Please left justify, right space fill. Include leading zeros, if they are part of the number. Space-fill the field if the number is not known.

**Examples:** For 001-0016-1, the field should have "00100161"  
For unknown numbers, the field should be space-filled.

### Money Amount Fields — Return and Schedule Record Layouts

Money amount fields are 13 bytes with the decimal implied two positions from the right. Please right justify and include leading zeroes if there is an amount to enter. Do not enter the decimal point. Zero-fill if the field is not needed. Negative values are not allowed.

**Examples:** For \$12,345,678,901.12, the field should have "1234567890112"  
For \$123.45, the field should have "0000000012345" For  
\$0.00, the field should be zero-filled, "0000000000000"

## Money Amount Fields — Debit Authorization Record Layout

Money amount fields are 10 bytes with the decimal implied two positions from the right. Please right justify and include leading zeroes if there is an amount to enter. Do not enter the decimal point. Zero-fill if the field is not needed. Negative values are not allowed.

**Examples:** For \$12,345,678.90, the field should have “1234567890”  
For \$123.45, the field should have “0000012345”  
For \$0.00, the field should be zero-filled, “0000000000”

## ZIP Code Field

The ZIP code field must contain the ZIP code in the first five positions and the extended ZIP (or ZIP +4) code in the last four. If you know the five-digit ZIP code but not the +4, enter the five-digit ZIP code followed by four spaces. If you do not know the ZIP code, leave the entire field blank (space-filled).

**Examples:** For a ZIP code of 62341-3980, the field should have “623413980”  
For a ZIP code of 62341, the field should have “62341 ”  
For an unknown ZIP code, the field should be space-filled.

## Dates

Full date fields must be entered in month/day/year format. Make the year a 4-position year. Please space fill the field if the date is not known. Other dates, such as the tax period, do not require the day. In this case, simply enter the year and month. (The record layouts will tell you which format to use. C — century, Y — year, M — month, D — day.)

**Examples:** For January 25, 2016, the field would be in the record as “01252016”.  
For the tax period type of date, the field would be “201601”.  
For an unknown date, *if the date is not a required field*, the field would be blank (space-filled).



# ***Header Record and Acknowledgments***

## **Header record**

A header record must be included at the beginning of the records to tell our programs the type of work contained in the records that follow. Each electronic transmission can include any one or more of two different “types” of work:

- **RT-2, Telecommunications Tax Return**, and supporting schedules;
- **RT-2-X, Amended Telecommunications Tax Return**, and supporting schedules;  
and
- **Debit Authorization records**.

Include one header record at the beginning of each different type of work and every time the liability period changes. If you file more than one return at a time or for more than one company at a time, as a service group would, you must include a header at the beginning of each return.

## **Acknowledgment (ACK) file**

The ACK file is posted for pickup by the transmitter after we have received the electronic file. It is created to confirm that we have received the file and to list errors that must be corrected before the data is sent again. The ACK file consists of a number of record types. The first record is the header record you sent us with the exception of the type of transmission indicator field. This field is replaced with a “T” for test or “P” for production, depending on the file transmitted. If you sent more than one type, you will have one header record returned for each type you sent. The last record is an end of file record.

After each header record, you may have one or more ACK records, each followed by all Acknowledgment Error (ACR) records associated with it. If a return or schedule is accepted, you will have an ACK record with an “A” in the acceptance code. No ACR records will follow it. If the file is rejected due to an invalid header format or an interrupted or incomplete transmission, you will receive an ACK record with a “T” in the acceptance code and the words “BAD TRANSMISSION” in Columns 17 – 32. If the file is rejected due to our record count not matching the “Total Number of Records” field in your end of file record, you will receive an ACK record with a “T” in the Acceptance Code and the words “OUT OF BALANCE” in Columns 17 – 32. If it is rejected for other reasons or accepted with errors, you will have an ACK record with an “R” or an “E” in the Acceptance Code followed by one ACR record for each record in your file that requires correction. We list only the first 50 error codes per record in error.

Files with transmission rejection (“T” in the Acceptance code) must be corrected and retransmitted because none of the returns were accepted. Rejected returns (“R” in the Acceptance code) must be corrected and reassembled into a new file with appropriate headers and trailers because they were not accepted for processing.

You will get one acknowledgment for each return (including attached schedules) filed for each taxpayer or liability.

If a return is rejected, all records for that return are rejected, including the attached schedules.