

ST 17-0004-GIL 02/06/2017 EXEMPT ORGANIZATIONS

A person whose activities are organized and conducted primarily as a not-for-profit service enterprise, and who engages in selling tangible personal property at retail (whether to the public or merely to members and their guests) is engaged in the business of selling tangible personal property at retail with respect to such transactions, excepting only a person organized and operated exclusively for charitable, religious or educational purposes either (1), to the extent of sales by such person to its members, students, patients or inmates of tangible personal property to be used primarily for the purposes of such person, or (2), to the extent of sales by such person of tangible personal property which is not sold or offered for sale by persons organized for profit. 35 ILCS 120/1.

February 6, 2017

RE: EXEMPT ORGANIZATION

Dear Xxxxx:

This letter is in response to your letter dated January 6, 2017, in which you requested information. The Department issues two types of letter rulings. Private Letter Rulings (“PLRs”) are issued by the Department in response to specific taxpayer inquiries concerning the application of a tax statute or rule to a particular fact situation. A PLR is binding on the Department, but only as to the taxpayer who is the subject of the request for ruling and only to the extent the facts recited in the PLR are correct and complete. Persons seeking PLRs must comply with the procedures for PLRs found in the Department’s regulations at 2 Ill. Adm. Code 1200.110. The purpose of a General Information Letter (“GIL”) is to direct taxpayers to Department regulations or other sources of information regarding the topic about which they have inquired. A GIL is not a statement of Department policy and is not binding on the Department. See 2 Ill. Adm. Code 1200.120. You may access our website at [www.tax.illinois.gov](http://www.tax.illinois.gov) to review regulations, letter rulings and other types of information relevant to your inquiry.

The nature of your inquiry and the information you have provided require that we respond with a GIL. In your letter you have stated and made inquiry as follows:

We are the accountants for the above described exempt organization and would like to request a private ruling or simply verify the following. Our client provides education to inmates by teaching them cooking skills at the COUNTY Correctional Facility. They would like to sell the meals directly to the inmates themselves if they would like to purchase them. It is my understanding they would not need to charge them sales tax because they are a charitable/educational organization selling tangible personal property to inmates to be used originally for the purpose of such person.

Based on the above facts I would like to verify that this to be true. Your response would be greatly appreciated.

**DEPARTMENT’S RESPONSE:**

The Illinois Retailers' Occupation Tax Act imposes a tax upon persons engaged in this State in the business of selling tangible personal property to purchasers for use or consumption. See 35 ILCS 120/2; 86 Ill. Adm. Code 130.101. In Illinois, Use Tax is imposed on the privilege of using, in this State, any kind of tangible personal property that is purchased anywhere at retail from a retailer. See 35 ILCS 105/3; 86 Ill. Adm. Code 150.101. These taxes comprise what is commonly known as "sales" tax in Illinois. If the purchases occur in Illinois, the purchasers must pay the Use Tax to the retailer at the time of purchase. The retailers are then allowed to retain the amount of Use Tax paid to reimburse themselves for their Retailers' Occupation Tax liability incurred on those sales. If the purchases occur outside Illinois, purchasers must self-assess their Use Tax liability and remit it directly to the Department.

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This means that if the prison were to sell such meals to its inmates, the sale would be tax exempt. However, your letter states that your client, rather than the prison would engage in selling the meals to inmates. In this instance, the meals would be subject to Retailers' Occupation Tax.

I hope this information is helpful. If you require additional information, please visit our website at [www.tax.illinois.gov](http://www.tax.illinois.gov) or contact the Department's Taxpayer Information Division at (217) 782-3336.

Very truly yours,

Cara Bishop  
Senior Counsel

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