

Chapter 172

TAXATION

GENERAL REFERENCES

Assessments — See Ch. 5.

ARTICLE I

Utility Tax

[Adopted 8-3-1970 by L.L. No. 3-1970 (Ch. 20A, Art. I, of the 1974 Code)]

§ 172-1. Imposition of tax; legislative authority.¹

Pursuant to the authority granted by § 5-530 of the Village Law of the State of New York, a tax equal to 1% of its gross income from and after the first day of September 1970 is hereby imposed upon every utility doing business in the Village of Palmyra, New York, which is subject to the supervision of the State Department of Public Service, which utility has a gross income for 12 months ending August 31, in excess of \$500, except motor carriers or brokers subject to such supervision under Transportation Law § 240; and a tax equal to 1% of its gross operating income from and after the first day of September 1970 is hereby imposed upon every other utility doing business in the Village of Palmyra, New York, which has a gross operating income for the 12 months ending August 31, in excess of \$500, which taxes shall have application only within the territorial limits of the Village of Palmyra, New York, and shall be in addition to any and all other taxes and fees imposed by any other provision of law. Such taxes shall not be imposed on any transaction originating or consummated outside of the territorial limits of the Village of Palmyra, New York, notwithstanding that some acts be necessarily performed with respect to such transaction within such limits.

§ 172-2. Definitions.

For the purpose of this article, the terms used herein are defined as follows:

GROSS INCOME — Receipts received in or by reason of any sale, conditional or otherwise (except sales hereinafter referred to with respect to which it is provided that the profits from the sale shall be included in the gross income), made or service rendered for ultimate consumption or use by the purchaser in the Village of Palmyra, New York, including cash, credits and property of any kind or nature (whether or not such sale is made or such service is rendered for profit), without any deduction therefrom on account of the cost of the property sold, the cost of the materials used, labor, services or other costs, interest or discount paid, or any other expense whatsoever; also profits from the sale of real property growing out of the ownership or use of or interest in such property; also profit from the sale of personal property (other than property of a kind which would properly be included in the inventory of the taxpayer if on hand at the close of the period for which a return is made); also receipts from interest, dividends and royalties derived from sources within the Village of Palmyra, New York, other than such as are received from a corporation a majority of whose voting stock is owned by the taxpaying utility, without any deduction therefrom for any expenses whatsoever incurred in connection with the receipt thereof; and also profits from any transaction (except sales for resale and rentals) within the Village of Palmyra, New York, whatsoever; provided, however, that the words “gross income” shall include, in the case of a utility engaged in selling telephony or telephone service, only receipts from local exchange services wholly consummated within the Village of Palmyra, New York, and in the case of a utility engaged in selling telegraphy or telegraph service, only receipts from transactions wholly consummated within the Village of Palmyra, New York.

1. Editor's Note: Amended at time of adoption of Code (see Ch. 1, General Provisions, Art. I).

GROSS OPERATING INCOME — Receipts received in or by reason of any sale, conditional or otherwise, made for the ultimate consumption or use by the purchaser of gas, electricity, steam, water, refrigeration, telephony or telegraphy, or in or by reason of the furnishing for such consumption or use of gas, electric, steam, water, refrigeration, telephone or telegraph service in the Village of Palmyra, New York, including cash, credits and property of any kind or nature, without any deduction therefrom on account of the cost of the property sold, the cost of materials used, labor, services or other costs, interest or discount paid, or any other expenses whatsoever.

PERSON — Includes persons, corporations, companies, associations, joint-stock associations, copartnerships, estates, assignees of rent, any person acting in a fiduciary capacity or any other entity, and persons, their assignees, lessees, trustees or receivers, appointed by any court whatsoever, or by any other means, except the state, municipalities, political and civil subdivisions of the state or municipality and public districts.

UTILITY — Includes every person subject to the supervision of the State Department of Public Service, except persons engaged in the business of operating or leasing sleeping and parlor railroad cars or operating railroads other than street surface, rapid transit, subway and elevated railroads, and also includes every person (whether or not such person is subject to such supervision) who sells gas, electricity, steam, water, refrigeration, telephony or telegraphy, delivered through mains, pipes or wires, or furnishes gas, electricity, steam, water, refrigeration, telephone or telegraph service by means of mains, pipes or wires, regardless of whether such activities are the main business of such person or are only incidental thereto, or whether use is made of the public streets.

§ 172-3. Records to be kept by utility.

Every utility subject to tax under this article shall keep such records of its business and in such form as the Village Treasurer or the Village Board may require. Such records shall be preserved for a period of three years, except that the Village Treasurer or the Village Board may consent to their destruction within that period or may require that they be kept longer.

§ 172-4. Filing by utility.

Every utility subject to tax hereunder shall file annually, on or before the 25th day of February, a return for the 12 calendar months ending the 31st day of December, or, on or before the 25th day of March, a return for the 12 calendar months preceding such return date of any portion thereof for which the tax imposed hereby is effective; provided, however, that in lieu of the annual return required by the foregoing provisions, any utility may file quarterly on or before September 25, December 25, March 25 and June 25, a return for the three calendar months preceding each such return date, and in the case of the first such return, for all preceding calendar months during which the tax imposed hereby was effective. Every return shall state the gross income or gross operating income for the period covered thereby. Returns shall be filed with the Village Treasurer on a form to be furnished by him for such purpose and shall contain such other data, information or matter as he may require to be included therein. The Village Treasurer, in order to ensure payment of the tax imposed, may require at any time a further or supplemental return, which shall contain any data that may be specified by him, and

he may require any utility doing business in the Village of Palmyra, New York, to file an annual return, which shall contain any data specified by him, regardless of whether the utility is subject to tax under this article. Every return shall have annexed thereto an affidavit of the head of the utility making the same, or of the owner or copartner thereof, or of a principal officer of the corporation, if such business is conducted by a corporation, to the effect that the statements contained therein are true.

§ 172-5. Payment of tax.

At the time of filing a return as required by this article, each utility shall pay to the Village of Palmyra the tax imposed by this article for the period covered by such return. Such tax shall be due and payable at the time of filing the return, or, if a return is not filed when due, on the last day on which the return is required to be filed.

§ 172-6. Sufficiency of return.

- A. In case any return filed pursuant to this article shall be insufficient or unsatisfactory to the Village Treasurer, and if a corrected or sufficient return is not filed within 20 days after the same is required by notice from him, or if no return is made for any period, the Village Treasurer shall determine the amount of tax due from such information as he is able to obtain, and if necessary, may estimate the tax on the basis of external indices or otherwise. He shall give notice of such determination to the person liable for such tax. Such determination shall finally and irrevocably fix such tax, unless the person against whom it is assessed shall, within 30 days after the giving of notice of such determination, apply to the Village Treasurer for a hearing, or unless the Village Treasurer of his own motion shall reduce the same. After such hearing, the Village Treasurer shall give notice of his decision to the person liable for the tax. Such decision may be reviewed by a proceeding under Article 78 of the Civil Practice Law and Rules of the State of New York if application therefor is made within 90 days after the giving of notice of such decision. An order to review such decision shall not be granted unless the amount of any tax sought to be reviewed, with interest and penalties thereon, if any, shall be first deposited with the Village Treasurer and an undertaking filed with him, in such amount and with such sureties as a justice of the Supreme Court shall approve, to the effect that, if such proceeding be dismissed or the tax confirmed, the applicant will pay all costs and charges which may accrue in the prosecution of such proceeding, or at the option of the applicant, such undertaking may be in a sum sufficient to cover the tax, interest, penalties, costs and charges aforesaid, in which event the applicant shall not be required to pay such tax, interest and penalties as a condition precedent to the granting of such order.
- B. Except in the case of a willfully false or fraudulent return with intent to evade the tax, no assessment of additional tax shall be made after the expiration of more than three years from the date of the filing of a return; provided, however, that where no return has been filed as required by this article, the tax may be assessed at any time.

§ 172-7. Notice.

Any notice authorized or required under the provisions of this article may be given by mailing the same to the persons for whom it is intended, in a postpaid envelope,

addressed to such person at the address given by him in the last return filed by him under this article, or, if no return has been filed, then to such address as may be obtainable. The mailing of such notice shall be presumptive evidence of the receipt of the same by the person to whom addressed. Any period of time which is determined according to the provisions of this article by the giving of notice shall commence to run from the date of mailing of such notice.

§ 172-8. Failure to file; penalty.

Any person failing to file a return or corrected return, or to pay any tax or any portion thereof, within the time required by this article shall be subject to a penalty of 5% of the amount of tax due, plus 1% of such tax for each month of delay or fraction thereof, excepting the first month, after such return was required to be filed or such tax became due. The Village Treasurer, for cause shown, may extend the time for filing any return; and if satisfied that the delay was excusable, may remit all or any portion of the penalty fixed by the foregoing provisions of this section.

§ 172-9. Refund.

If, within one year from the payment of any tax or penalty, the payer thereof shall make application for a refund thereof, and the Village Treasurer or the court shall determine that such tax or penalty or any portion thereof was erroneously or illegally collected, the Village Treasurer shall refund the amount so determined. For like cause and within the same period, a refund may be so made on the initiative of the Village Treasurer. However, no refund shall be made of a tax or penalty paid pursuant to a determination of the Village Treasurer as hereinbefore provided, unless the Village Treasurer, after a hearing as hereinbefore provided, or of his own motion, shall have reduced the tax or penalty or if it shall have been established in a proceeding under Article 78 of the Civil Practice Law and Rules of the State of New York that such determination was erroneous or illegal. All refunds shall be made out of moneys collected under this article. An application for a refund, made as hereinbefore provided, shall be deemed an application for the revision of any tax or penalty complained of and the Village Treasurer may receive additional evidence with respect thereto. After making his determination, the Village Treasurer shall give notice thereof to the person interested, and he shall be entitled to an order to review such determination under said Article 78 of the Civil Practice Law and Rules of the State of New York, subject to the provision hereinbefore contained relating to the granting of such an order.

§ 172-10. Adding tax to bills prohibited.

The tax imposed by this article shall be charged against and be paid by the utility and shall not be added as a separate item to bills rendered by the utility to customers or others but shall constitute a part of the operating costs of such utility.

§ 172-11. Failure to pay tax; lien.

Whenever any person shall fail to pay any tax or penalty imposed by this article, the Village Attorney shall, upon the request of the Village Board, bring an action to enforce payment of the same. The proceeds of any judgment obtained in any such action shall be paid to the Village Treasurer. Each such tax and penalty shall be a lien upon the property

of the person liable to pay the same, in the same manner and to the same extent that the tax and penalty imposed by the Tax Law, § 186-a, is made a lien.

§ 172-12. Rules and regulations of Treasurer.

In the administration of this article, the Village Treasurer shall have power to make such reasonable rules and regulations, not inconsistent with law, as may be necessary for the exercise of his powers and the performance of his duties, and to prescribe the form of blanks, reports and other records relating to the administration and enforcement of the tax, to take testimony and proofs, under oath, with reference to any matter within the line of his official duty under this article, and to subpoena and require the attendance of witnesses and the production of books, papers and documents.

§ 172-13. Disclosure by Treasurer; penalties for offenses.

- A. Except in accordance with proper judicial order or as otherwise provided by law, it shall be unlawful for the Village Treasurer, or any agent, clerk or employee of the Village of Palmyra, New York, to divulge or make known in any manner the amount of gross income or gross operating income, or any particulars set forth or disclosed in any return under this article. The officer charged with the custody of such returns shall not be required to produce any of them or evidence of anything contained in them in any action or proceeding in any court, except on behalf of the Village of Palmyra, New York, in an action or proceeding under the provisions of this article, or on behalf of the State Tax Commission in an action or proceeding under the provisions of the Tax Law of the State of New York, or on behalf of any party to any action or proceeding under the provisions of this article when the returns or facts shown thereby are directly involved in such action or proceeding, in either of which events the court may require the production of, and may admit in evidence, so much of said returns or of the facts shown thereby as are pertinent to the action or proceeding and no more.
- B. Nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit the delivery to a person, or his duly authorized representative, of a copy of any return filed by him, nor to prohibit the publication of statistics so classified as to prevent the identification of particular returns and the items thereof, or the publication of delinquent lists showing the names of persons who have failed to pay their taxes at the time and in the manner provided for by this article, together with any relevant information which in the opinion of the Village Treasurer may assist in the collection of such delinquent taxes; or the inspection by the Village Attorney or other legal representative of the Village of Palmyra, New York, of the return of any person who shall bring action to set aside or review the tax based thereon, or against whom an action has been instituted in accordance with the provisions of this article.
- C. Any offense against the foregoing secrecy provisions shall be punishable by a fine not exceeding \$1,000 or by imprisonment not exceeding one year, or both, and if the offender be an officer, agent, clerk or employee of the Village of Palmyra, New York, he shall be dismissed from office and shall be incapable of holding any office or employment for the Village of Palmyra, New York, for a period of five years thereafter.
- D. Notwithstanding any provisions of this article, the Village Treasurer may exchange

with the chief fiscal officer of any city or any other village in the State of New York information contained in returns filed under this article, provided such city or other village grants similar privileges to the Village of Palmyra, New York, and provided such information is to be used for tax purposes only, and the Village Treasurer shall, upon request, furnish the State Tax Commission with any information contained in such returns.

§ 172-14. Disposition of taxes and penalties.

All taxes and penalties received by the Village Treasurer under this article shall be paid into the treasury of the Village of Palmyra, New York, and shall be credited to and deposited in the general fund of the Village.