



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Pinellas Tourist Taxes Now Payable Online

Tax Collector's Office Launches TouristExpress

CLEARWATER – Pinellas County Tax Collector Diane Nelson today announced a new online payment system for tourist development taxes called TouristExpress.

“TouristExpress will make it easier and more convenient for hotels, motels and those in the short-term rental business in Pinellas County,” said Tax Collector Diane Nelson. “By putting tourist development taxes online, taxpayers can make payments faster and eliminate the hassle of paper returns.”

The tourist development tax, a 5 percent tax known as the “bed tax” required by Florida law on accommodations rented for less than six months, produces close to \$25 million each year in Pinellas County. Tourist development taxes are used mainly for tourism marketing efforts by the St. Petersburg/Clearwater Area Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Current tourist development account holders can register for TouristExpress by visiting www.taxcollect.com/touristexpress. The new online system, developed in partnership with Grant Street Group, is part of an ongoing effort by the Pinellas County Tax Collector's Office to provide taxpayers with more self-service Internet options.

Anyone with short-term taxable rentals in Pinellas County who is not currently paying tourist development taxes should contact the Pinellas County Tax Collector's Office to complete a tax application. The tax collector's office is offering an amnesty program from July 1 through Sept. 30 that releases delinquent taxpayers of standard liabilities and penalties if they pay all past-due tourist taxes plus 50 percent of interest charges.

Failure to pay tourist development taxes violates Florida law and is punishable by statutory remedies, including tax penalties, daily interest, and a warrant filed in the Pinellas County Official Records.

For more information on TouristExpress and tourist development taxes, visit www.taxcollect.com or call (727) 464-3953 to speak to a tax specialist.

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The Pinellas County Tax Collector's Office is committed to delivering “World-Class Service, Anytime, Any Place.” We serve our citizens promptly, satisfy licensing and identification needs, accurately collect and distribute revenue, are good stewards of public funds, and continually pursue organizational excellence.