

Connecticut's Admissions and Dues Taxes

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Issue

Explain the state's admissions and dues taxes.

Summary

Connecticut's admissions tax is a tax on most admission charges to places offering amusement, entertainment, or recreation in the state. The tax applies to movies, theaters, sporting events, concerts, amusement parks, and similar places and events, with certain exceptions. The tax rate is 10% for most admissions and 6% for movie tickets costing more than \$5. The dues tax is a 10% tax on membership dues or initiation fees to most social, athletic, or sporting club organizations in the state. Both taxes are levied on the facility assessing the charge and collected by the facility from the customer or member ([CGS § 12-540 et seq.](#)).

In addition to the state admissions tax, a 2016 state law authorizes municipalities to impose a local option admissions surcharge on admission charges to most events held at facilities located within the municipalities ([CGS § 7-168a](#), as amended by [PA 17-2, June Special Session \(§ 111\)](#)).

Admissions Tax

Tax Rate and Base

The admissions tax applies to amounts paid for tickets; licenses; skybox, luxury suite, or club seat rentals; and any other admission charges, including any charges for the right to buy seats. It covers theaters; lecture and concert halls; amusement parks and fairgrounds; dance halls; sporting

facilities, ball parks, race tracks, tennis courts, golf and miniature golf courses, skating rinks, beaches, swimming pools, and gyms; stadiums and amphitheaters; convention centers; auto, boat, camping, home, dog, and antique shows; and other similar venues and events ([CGS § 12-540\(3\)](#)).

The tax rate is 10%, with the exception of movie tickets costing more than \$5, which are subject to a 6% tax.

Exemptions

Table 1 lists admissions tax exemptions. The exemptions fall into three categories: (1) those based on the amount of the admission charge, (2) those based on the type of event or activity, and (3) those based on the facility where an event is held.

Table 1: Admissions Tax Exemptions

<i>Exempt Charges</i>
Admission charges under \$1
Movie tickets costing \$5 or less
<i>Exempt Events or Activities</i>
Daily admission charges that allow patrons to participate in a sport or athletic activity
Events from which all proceeds go exclusively to a federally tax-exempt organization, provided the organization actively engages in presenting the event and assumes the financial risk of presenting it (excluding events at Rentschler Field)
Other events that the revenue services commissioner determines are held primarily to raise money for a nonprofit organization, provided the amount raised is greater than the tax that would otherwise be due (excluding those at Rentschler Field)
Events paid for by senior centers providing recreational, cultural, and other leisure activities (excluding those at Rentschler Field)
Live performances at Gateway's Candlewood Playhouse, Ocean Beach Park, or any other nonprofit theater
Carnival and amusement park rides
Interscholastic athletic events at Rentschler Field
Athletic events presented by a Atlantic League of Professional Baseball member team at the New Britain Stadium (<i>exemption expires November 31, 2017</i>)
<i>Exempt Facilities</i>
Cabarets serving alcohol and providing music, dancing, or other entertainment that, before July 1, 1999, were subject to the cabaret tax
XL Center (<i>exemption expires November 31, 2017</i>)
Webster Bank Arena in Bridgeport (<i>exemption expires November 31, 2017</i>)
Dunkin' Donuts Park in Hartford (<i>exemption expires November 31, 2017</i>)

Dues Tax

The 10% dues tax applies to amounts paid as dues or initiation fees to any social, athletic, or sporting club (i.e., organizations owned or operated, or both owned and operated, by members). Table 2 lists the charges and organizations exempt from the tax.

Table 2: Dues Tax Exemptions

Exempt Charges
Instruction charges
Locker rentals
Special assessments for certain capital expenditures
Exempt Organizations
Clubs charging annual dues and initiation fees of \$100 or less
Clubs sponsored or controlled by a charitable or religious organization, government agency, or nonprofit educational institution
Any society, order, or association operating under the lodge system or any local fraternal organization among students of a college or university
Lawn bowling clubs

Revenue

Table 3 shows the amount of revenue the state collected from the admissions and dues taxes in FYs 14 through 16.

Admissions tax revenue is broken down according to revenue received from admissions to (1) movies and (2) all other admissions.

Table 3: Admissions and Dues Tax Revenue

FY	Dues Tax	Admissions Tax		Total Revenue
		Movies	Other Admissions	
16	\$25,102,031	\$5,596,331	\$8,632,451	\$39,330,813
15	24,947,079	5,246,035	8,413,330	38,606,444
14	23,843,549	5,428,268	10,468,040	39,739,857

Source: DRS [FY 16 Annual Report](#)

Local Admissions Surcharge

State law allows municipalities to impose a surcharge on admission charges to events held at facilities located within the municipalities. The surcharge must be imposed by ordinance and may be up to 5% of the admissions charge, except for the surcharge on events held at the Dunkin' Donuts Park in Hartford, which may be up to 10%. The local surcharge applies in addition to the state admission tax.

By law, the surcharge may not apply to (1) motion picture shows; (2) events from which all proceeds go exclusively to a federally tax-exempt organization, provided that organization actively engages in and assumes the financial risk of presenting the event; and (3) pari-mutuel or off-track betting facilities already subject to a local admissions tax. Municipalities may, by ordinance, exclude additional events or facilities from the surcharge ([CGS § 7-168a](#), as amended by [PA 17-2, June Special Session \(§ 111\)](#)).

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