



# Provincial Sales Tax (PST) Bulletin

Bulletin PST 129

Issued: May 2014

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## Florists

### Provincial Sales Tax Act

Latest Revision: The revision bar ( | ) identifies changes to the previous version of this bulletin dated March 2018. For a summary of the changes, see Latest Revision at the end of this document.

This bulletin provides information to help florists in B.C. understand how PST applies to their businesses.

If you operate a nursery, garden store or greenhouse, see [Bulletin PST 128](#), Nurseries and Garden Stores.

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## Sales

### Taxable Sales

You charge PST on the sale of goods, such as flowers, plants, vases, greeting cards and other related gift items, unless the sale is a non-taxable sale as described below. This includes sales of goods that are picked up by your customers from you in B.C. as well as goods that you ship or deliver (either from your location or the location of a third party) or arrange to ship or deliver to a location in B.C.

You calculate PST on the total purchase price paid by the purchaser for taxable goods, such as flowers. The total purchase price includes:

- The value of any services accepted by the seller on account of the purchase price

- Any charges for financing, interest, customs and excise
- Any delivery or transportation charges (including shipping and handling) incurred at or before the time that title to the goods passes to the purchaser

In most cases, delivery charges are incurred at or before the time title to the goods transfers. As a result, you generally charge PST on delivery charges as they form part of the taxable purchase price of the goods.

**Example:**

You accept an order for a floral arrangement and pre-arrange with your customer to deliver the arrangement to a funeral home. You charge PST on both the floral arrangement (taxable good) and the delivery charge as it was incurred at the time of sale and before title to the goods transferred to your customer.

PST also applies to delivery charges in the following circumstances:

- You arrange for the taxable goods to be delivered from an out-of-province supplier directly to a location in B.C.
- You incur transportation costs related to receiving goods (e.g. cost to bring in out-of-season or specialty flowers) before their delivery within B.C. and re-bill these charges to the purchaser

PST applies to the delivery charges even if they are separately stated on the sales invoice.

For more information on how PST applies to delivery charges, see [Bulletin PST 302](#), Delivery Charges.

## **Non-Taxable Sales**

You do not charge PST on either the purchase price or the delivery charges if you (the seller) ship, deliver, or arrange to ship or deliver the goods from:

- a location in B.C. to a location outside B.C., provided that no use whatsoever is to be made by the purchaser of the goods while the goods are in B.C., or
- a location outside B.C. to another location outside B.C.

To show why you did not collect PST on these sales, you must keep proof that you shipped, delivered, or arranged to ship or deliver the goods to an out-of-province location (e.g. bills of lading, shipping invoices or similar documentation).

You may also use the Out-of-Province Delivery Exemption form ([FIN 462](#)) to record sales if the goods were delivered from a location in B.C. to a location outside B.C.

The **FIN 462** is an optional form that may be used in addition to the required documentation described above.

## **Bundled Goods and Services**

If you sell taxable and non-taxable goods or services together for a single price, you are making a bundled sale. The general rule for charging PST on a bundled sale is that you charge PST only on the fair market value of the taxable portion, unless a specific exemption applies. The fair market value is the price that a good or service would normally sell for in the open market.

### **Example:**

If you provide a floral bouquet (taxable) for a single price that includes chocolates (non-taxable), the general rule is that you charge 7% PST on the fair market value of the floral bouquet.

For more information, see [Bulletin PST 316](#), Bundled Sales and Leases.

## **Sales to Other Retail Florists**

You do not charge PST on goods sold to other retail florists if they are purchasing the goods solely for resale and they provide you with their PST number or, if they do not have a PST number, a completed Certificate of Exemption – General ([FIN 490](#)). You record the purchaser's PST number on the bill, invoice or receipt, or retain the completed Certificate of Exemption – General ([FIN 490](#)).

For more information, see [Bulletin PST 208](#), Goods for Resale.

## **Purchases and Leases for Your Business**

### **Taxable Goods**

You must pay PST on the purchase or lease of new or used taxable goods you use in your business, such as:

- Advertising materials, such as flyers and brochures
- Cleaning supplies, such as rags, soaps and cleaning solutions
- Computer hardware including point-of-sale systems and other electronic devices
- Energy for heat and light (except electricity)
- Freestanding coolers and refrigerators
- Items you purchase to give away as free promotions (see below)
- Paper towels and toilet paper

- Shelving and display equipment
- Stationery, furniture and office equipment

You must also pay PST on the following.

- Software, unless a specific exemption applies (e.g. custom software). For more information, see [Bulletin PST 105](#), Software.
- Related services you purchase for your own equipment, such as repairs to your office equipment. For more information, see [Bulletin PST 301](#), Related Services.

If your supplier does not charge you PST on taxable items, you must self-assess (pay directly to us) the PST due on your next PST return.

If you do not have a PST number, you must self-assess the PST due using a Casual Remittance Return ([FIN 405](#)) on or before the last day of the month following the month you obtained the taxable items. For example, if you purchase a taxable item in July, you must file the return and pay the PST no later than August 31.

## **Goods for Resale or Lease**

You are exempt from PST on goods you obtain solely for resale or lease to your customers. To purchase or lease these goods exempt from PST, give the supplier your PST number or, if you have not yet received a PST number, a completed Certificate of Exemption – General ([FIN 490](#)).

If you make a purchase that includes both exempt goods for resale and taxable goods you will use in your business, tell your supplier which goods are exempt and which goods are taxable. If they do not charge you PST on the taxable goods, you must self-assess the PST due.

For more information, see [Bulletin PST 208](#), Goods for Resale.

## **Change in Use**

If you take taxable goods from your resale inventory for business or personal use, you must self-assess the PST due on your cost of the goods.

If you have a PST number, you must self-assess the PST due on your next PST return. If you do not have a PST number, you must self-assess the PST due using a Casual Remittance Return ([FIN 405](#)) on or before the last day of the month following the month you used the goods for a taxable purpose.

If you take taxable goods from your lease inventory for business or personal use, you must self-assess PST as explained in [Bulletin PST 315](#), Rentals and Leases of Goods.

## **Containers and Packaging Materials**

Containers and packaging materials include items such as bags, bouquet wrapping paper, boxes and crates. It does not include items, such as vases and pots, purchased for resale. Whether PST applies to containers and packaging materials depends on how they are used by a business and whether there is a charge to the customer for them.

You are exempt from PST on containers and packaging materials (except reusable containers) you obtain solely for packaging goods for sale or lease, or if you provide them to your customers with their purchases of goods. However, you must pay PST on containers and packaging materials if you use them for other purposes, such as storing, handling or shipping goods, or you use them to provide a service.

Generally, you are not required to charge PST on the containers and packaging materials described above that you provide with goods and services, unless you separately charge your customers for them. However, in limited circumstances, you may be required to charge PST on the fair market value of the containers and packaging materials.

For more information, see [Bulletin PST 305](#), Containers and Packaging Materials.

## **Goods Brought Into B.C.**

You must pay PST if you purchase or lease taxable goods outside B.C. and bring or send them into B.C. or receive them in B.C. You must pay PST on the total amount you pay to bring the goods into B.C., including charges for transportation, customs, excise and any other costs, except the goods and services tax (GST).

If your supplier does not charge you PST at the time of the sale or lease, you must self-assess the PST due on your next PST return. If you have a PST number, you must self-assess the PST due on your next PST return.

If you do not have a PST number, you must self-assess the PST due using the Casual Remittance Return ([FIN 405](#)) on or before the last day of the month

following the month you brought or sent the goods into B.C. or received the goods in B.C.

For more information, see [Bulletin PST 310](#), Goods Brought Into B.C.

## **Bonus Items**

You may provide goods as bonus items with the purchase of other goods. For example, you may give your customer a bonus item when they purchase a floral bouquet worth at least \$50. For the purposes of the PST, these transactions are sales of both items.

If all of the items (e.g. purchased and provided as a bonus) are taxable goods (e.g. a stuffed animal with a purchase of a floral bouquet), you charge PST on the purchase price paid. You can purchase the bonus items exempt from PST as goods for resale.

If the transaction is for both taxable and non-taxable goods for a single price, you are making a bundled sale. The general rule for charging PST on a bundled sale is that you charge PST only on the fair market value of the taxable portion. The fair market value is the retail price that a good or service would normally sell for in the open market.

For example, if you sell flowers and a small book of poetry together, you charge 7% PST on the fair market value of the flowers.

For more information on bundled sales, see [Bulletin PST 316](#), Bundled Sales and Leases.

## **Promotional Materials**

Promotional materials are goods you use, give away or sell below cost to help advertise or promote your business. Examples of promotional material include samples, gifts, premiums and prizes, and goods given away as part of a loyalty or rewards points program.

You must pay PST on all taxable goods you purchase or make as promotional material. For example, you must pay PST if you buy calendars or balloons you will give away to promote your business.

Promotional material on which you must pay PST also includes taxable goods you obtain to sell at a price below cost. For example, you purchase stuffed animals at a cost of \$15 per animal. To promote greater sales, you offer the stuffed animals to preferred customers at a below cost price of \$12 per stuffed animal. Your

customer pays PST on the \$12 purchase price of the stuffed animal. In addition, on your next PST return, you need to self-assess PST based on the following formula:

$(\text{Cost} - \text{Customer's purchase price}) \times \text{PST rate} = \text{PST to self-assess}$

$(\$15 - \$12) \times 7\% = \$0.21 \text{ PST to self-assess}$

**Note:** You do not need to self-assess PST on goods sold below cost if you are not selling the goods below cost for promotional purposes. For example, you purchased baskets at \$25 per item and attempted to sell them for \$50 per item. After some time, you decide to mark down the remaining baskets to \$20 per item because their value has decreased. In this case, your customer pays PST on the \$20 purchase price of the baskets but you do not need to self-assess any additional PST.

For more information, see [Bulletin PST 311](#), Promotional Materials and Special Offers.



## Need more info?

Online: [gov.bc.ca/pst](http://gov.bc.ca/pst)

Toll free: 1-877-388-4440

Email: [CTBTaxQuestions@gov.bc.ca](mailto:CTBTaxQuestions@gov.bc.ca)

[Subscribe](#) to receive email notifications when B.C. tax information is updated.

The information in this bulletin is for your convenience and guidance and is not a replacement for the legislation.

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### Latest Revision

October 2022

- Revised to reflect that, effective April 1, 2019, electricity is fully exempt from PST for all purchasers
  - Clarified information about goods you purchase for resale or lease
  - Other minor revisions
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References: Provincial Sales Tax Act, sections 1 “non-taxable component”, “promotional distribution”, “promotional material”, “purchase price”, “taxable component”, “use”, 10, 16, 26, 34, 37, 49, 81, 105, 119, 137, 140.1, 141, 145 and 192; Provincial Sales Tax Exemption and Refund Regulation, section 26; Provincial Sales Tax Regulation, section 47.