



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Department of Revenue to Begin Processing
Individual Income Tax Returns on February 1, 2019**

Atlanta, GA - The Georgia Department of Revenue (DOR) will begin processing individual income tax returns on **February 1, 2019**. In addition to upgrading the state-of-the-art fraud management system, changing the opening of the processing period to February 1 helped lead to a reduction in attempted tax fraud, which decreased from \$212 million in 2017 to \$116 million in 2018.

As a reminder, businesses must file their employee W-2 information with both the Department of Revenue and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) by the January 31 deadline. The January 31 deadline allowed the Department to efficiently process a record number of returns in 2018. The filing deadline to submit 2018 individual income tax returns is Monday, April 15, 2019.

Reminders for both individuals and businesses:

Individuals:

- DOR will begin processing 2018 individual income tax returns on **February 1, 2019**.
- It may take more than **90 days** from the date of receipt by DOR to process a return and issue a refund.
- All first-time Georgia income tax filers, or taxpayers who have not filed in GA for at least five years, will receive their refund in the form of a paper check.

Businesses:

- Businesses must file employee W-2 information with DOR by **January 31**.
- Employers who file late may face penalties and will slow the processing of their employees' tax returns.

"Combatting tax fraud is especially important considering the amount of personal information that has been compromised over the past few years with several large-scale data breaches," said DOR Commissioner Lynne Riley. "Receiving employee W-2 information from businesses by January 31, greatly increases the Department's confidence when issuing individual income tax refunds."

The DOR also has been working with the IRS, the tax industry and other state revenue departments as part of the [Security Summit](#) initiative to continue strengthening processing systems to protect taxpayers from identity theft and refund fraud. The DOR and Summit partners continue to improve these safeguards to further protect taxpayers filing in 2019.

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