

Dear Taxpayer,

Last year you helped us gather input to find out what challenges small businesses had in filing their City of Seattle business taxes. Thank you!

We wanted to report to you on the results of the 2021 survey and tell you how we plan to act on the information in 2022 and beyond.

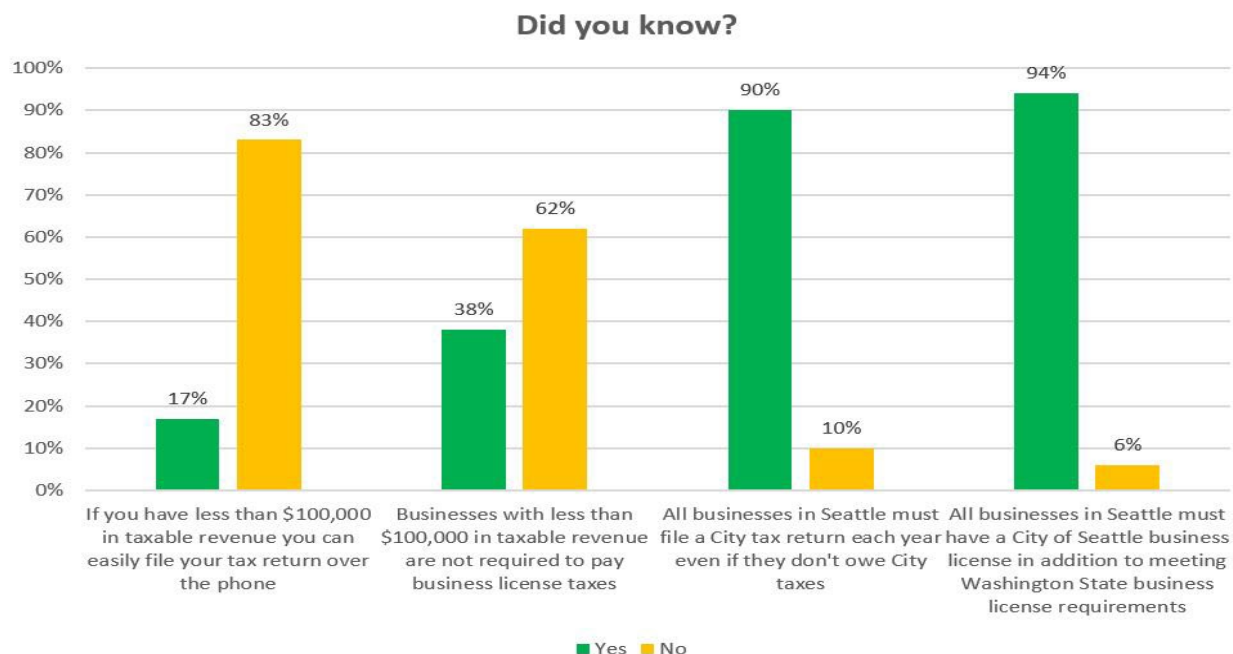
We continue to work on making our policies and processes easier to understand and follow, as well as more accessible and equitable.

Who did we ask?

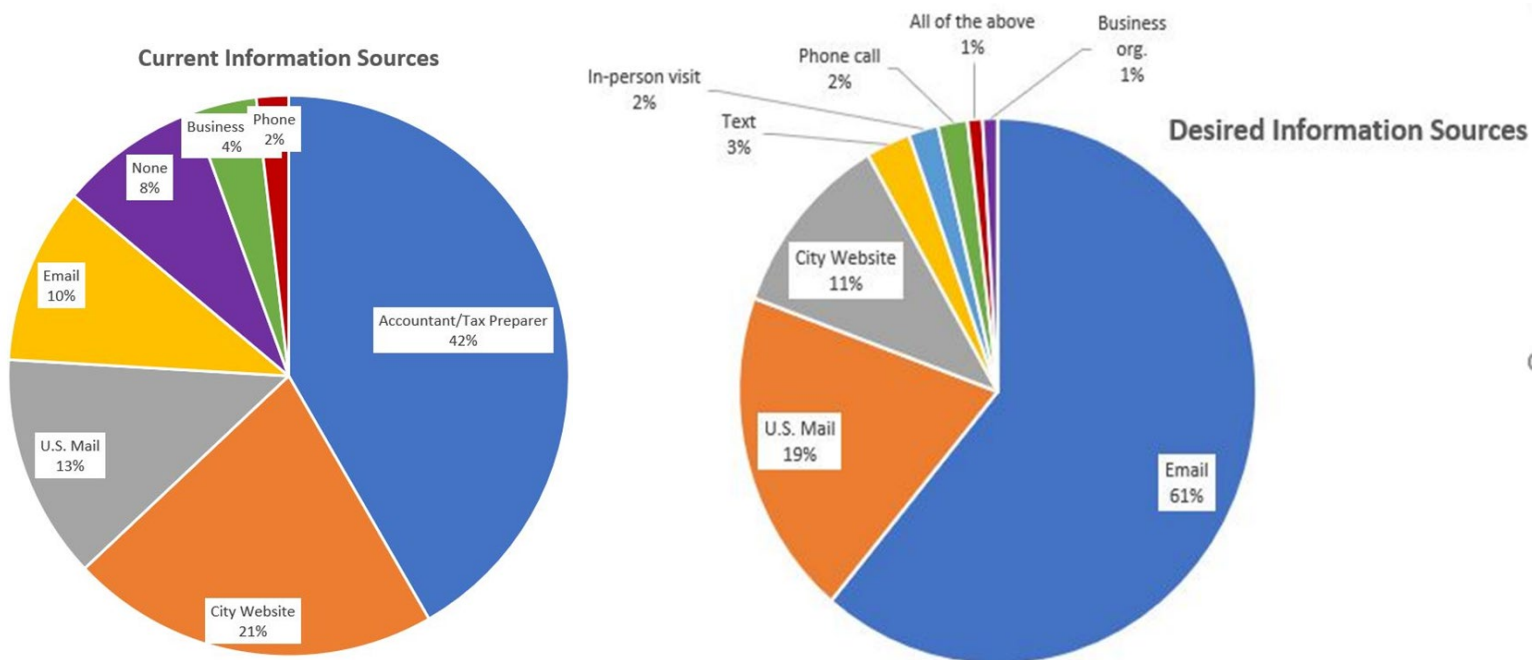
We sent our survey via email to 553 Seattle small businesses that had applied for a City grant in 2021. We received completed surveys from 108 businesses, which was a response rate of nearly 20%. Surveys like this one typically have a response rate of about 13%.

What did you say?

- Most businesses knew they needed a license/had to file and had followed the process.
- Many did not know that they **did not owe any tax if they had less than \$100,000 in annual revenue**.
- Many did not know that they could **easily file by phone**.

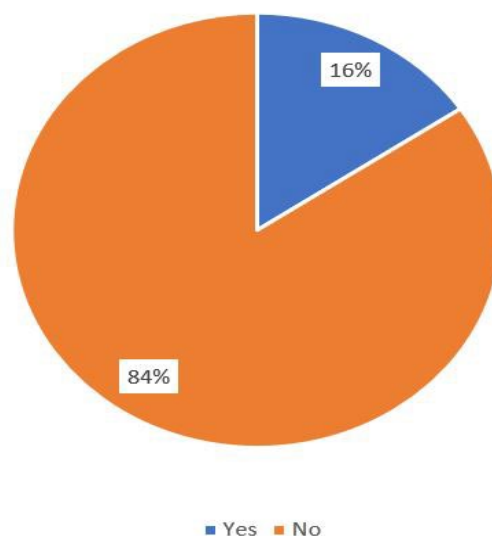


Most businesses **received information about their business taxes from a tax professional** and they would **prefer to get more information via email from the City of Seattle** License and Tax Administration.



In addition, a significant majority of those who answered the survey said that they did not think that the City's license and tax information was equally accessible.

Do you believe that tax and license information is available and accessible for BIPOC businesses, those owned and operated by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color?



What Actions Are We Taking?

1. Working harder to ensure tax and licensing changes are clearly communicated to all businesses, especially small businesses.
 - Providing free interpretation in dozens of languages when you call us at 206-684-8484.
 - Offering more information that is translated into multiple languages.
 - Sharing information regularly with business organizations, such as BIAs, chambers, and business associations.
2. Enhancing the phone filing option to add interactive voice responses in multiple languages.
3. Improving how we collect information when a business applies for a license or files taxes to gather optional information about language preference and race/ethnicity.
4. Researching how to add the ability to pay for a business license or pay taxes by phone.
5. Conducting visits with small businesses this summer to gather other ideas to make it easier to file business taxes, and we will be able to hold these conversations in multiple languages.

What Do We Hope to Achieve?

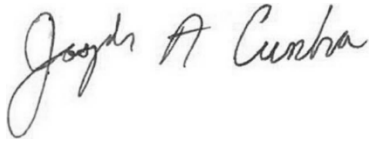
- Systematize our outreach efforts and create ongoing methods to gather input from you.
- Enable ongoing and quarterly points of contact to include one-to-one help sessions, e-mail communications, website resources, and trainings as needed.

What Are The Next Steps?

1. Enhance the current online filing/payment systems (SLIM and FileLocal) to collect more business owner demographic data.
2. Enhance the phone filing system and create effective ways to communicate about it with small business owners.
3. Continue to provide for interpretation and translation of materials.
4. Develop quarterly opportunities for small businesses to provide input via email, online, and in person.

In Conclusion

Thank you for helping to improve how we provide information and services. For those who indicated they would be willing to participate in future focus groups, we will let you know when we are able to conduct those. Let us know if you have any questions by sending us an email at tax@seattle.gov.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph A. Cunha". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'J' and 'C'.

Joseph Cunha
Division Director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jackie Mitchell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'J' and 'M'.

Jackie Mitchell
Deputy Director