

701—213.18(423) Webinars.

213.18(1) *In general.* Webinars are generally taxable as specified digital products. Specifically, webinars fall into the “other digital products” category as a news or information product. Purchasing access to a live or pre-recorded webinar, even if the webinar’s purpose is educational or otherwise, is not treated as purchase of a service.

213.18(2) *Nontaxable live webinars with virtual participation.* Purchases of access to a live webinar, meaning access to viewing a presentation occurring in real time, are not always subject to sales tax. Attending a presentation in person, if it is not an admission to an amusement, is generally not taxable under Iowa law. Similarly, purchasing access to a live webinar is not taxable if the live webinar allows for a level of participation that is substantially similar to an in-person presentation.

213.18(3) *Exemptions.* Since purchases of webinars are taxable as specified digital products, any sales tax exemptions that apply to specified digital products may also apply to webinars.

EXAMPLE 1: A person purchases access to a live webinar to view on the person’s computer or mobile device. The in-person presentation, which can be viewed by people with access to the live webinar, allows for in-person attendees to ask questions throughout the presentation. Persons viewing the presentation through the live webinar on their computer or mobile device cannot submit questions to the presenter throughout the duration of the webinar. The level of participation between the in-person presentation and the live webinar is not substantially similar. The purchase of access to view this live webinar is subject to sales tax.

EXAMPLE 2: A person purchases access to a live webinar to view on the person’s computer or mobile device. The in-person presentation, which is viewable by people with access to the live webinar, does not allow in-person attendees to ask questions throughout the presentation. The person viewing the presentation through the live webinar on the person’s computer or mobile device cannot submit questions to the presenter throughout the duration of the webinar. The level of participation between the in-person presentation and the live webinar is substantially similar. The purchase of access to view this live webinar is not subject to sales tax.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 423.1(55B).

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