

701—203.4(423) Excise tax included in and excluded from sales price.

203.4(1) An excise tax that is not an Iowa sales or use tax may be excluded from the sales price or purchase price of the sale or use of property or taxable services only if all of the following conditions exist:

a. The excise tax is imposed upon the identical sales price on which the Iowa sales tax is imposed or upon the purchase price that measures the amount of taxable use or upon a use identical to the Iowa taxable use and not upon some event or activity that precedes or occurs after the sale or use.

b. The legal incidence of the excise tax falls upon the purchaser who is also responsible for payment of the Iowa sales tax. The purchaser must be obligated to pay the excise tax either directly to the government in question or to another person (e.g., the retailer) who acts as a collector of the tax. *Gurley v. Rhoden*, 421 U.S. 200, 95 S. Ct. 1605, 44 L.Ed.2d 110 (1975) contains a description of the circumstances under which the legal, as opposed to the economic, burden of an excise tax falls upon the purchaser.

c. The name of the excise tax is specifically stated, and the amount of the excise tax is separately set out on the invoice, bill of sale, or another document that embodies a record of the sale.

EXAMPLE 1: The federal government imposes an excise tax upon the act of manufacturing certain tangible personal property within the United States. The amount of the tax is measured as a percentage of the price for the first sale of the property, which is usually to a wholesaler. However, one particular manufacturer sells its manufactured goods at retail in Iowa. Even if this tax meets the requirements for exclusion of paragraphs 203.4(1)“*b*” and “*c*,” it is not excludable because it does not meet the requirements of paragraph 203.4(1)“*a*.” The tax is not imposed upon the act of selling but upon the prior act of manufacturing. The tax is merely measured by the amount of the proceeds of the sale.

EXAMPLE 2: The federal government imposes an excise tax of 4 percent on a retailer’s sales price from sales of tangible personal property. The law allows the retailer to separately identify and bill a customer for the tax. However, if a retailer fails to pay the tax, the government cannot collect it from a purchaser, and if the government assesses tax against the retailer and secures a judgment requiring the retailer to pay the tax, the retailer that has failed to collect the tax from a purchaser on the initial sale has no right of reimbursement from the purchaser. This tax is not excludable from Iowa excise tax. Its economic burden falls upon the purchaser. However, since neither the government nor the retailer has any legal right to demand payment of the tax from a purchaser, the legal incidence of the tax is not upon the purchaser and the tax would not meet the requirements of paragraph 203.4(1)“*b*.”

203.4(2) The following federal excise taxes are to be included in the sales price upon which Iowa sales tax is to be paid for purposes of collecting Iowa sales tax:

a. The federal gallonage taxes imposed by 26 U.S.C. Sections 5001, 5041, and 5051 on distilled spirits, wines, and beer.

b. The tax imposed by 26 U.S.C. Section 5701 with regard to cigars, cigarettes, cigarette papers and tubes, smokeless tobacco, and pipe tobacco.

c. The federal tax imposed under 26 U.S.C. Section 4081 on gasoline.

203.4(3) The following excise taxes are excluded from the amount of the sales price:

a. The federal tax imposed by 26 U.S.C. Section 4251(a) on the communication services of local telephone service, toll telephone service, and teletypewriter exchange service.

b. The federal tax imposed by 26 U.S.C. Section 4051 upon the first retail sale of automobile and truck chassis and bodies, truck trailer and semitrailer chassis and bodies and tractors of the kind chiefly used for highway transportation in combination with trailers or semitrailers.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 423.1(51).

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