

ORDINANCE NO. 2018-03

AN ORDINANCE OF BETHEL TOWNSHIP, BERKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, LEVYING A LOCAL SERVICES TAX, REQUIRING EMPLOYERS TO WITHHOLD AND REMIT TAX, AND RELATED PROVISIONS

WHEREAS, the Local Tax Enabling Act (53 P.S. § 6924.101 *et seq.*) authorizes the Board of Supervisors to enact an Ordinance levying a local services tax upon individuals employed in Bethel Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania (the "Township"); and

WHEREAS, the Township is bisected by Interstate Route 78 which will result in significant commercial and industrial development which will increase the number of employees who are not residents of the Township; and,

WHEREAS, the increased number of such employees increases the burden on local services; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of Bethel Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania (the "Board") deems it in the best interest of the residents of the Township to establish and implement a local services tax; and

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the above recitals which are hereby incorporated by reference and made part hereof, the Board of Supervisors of Bethel Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania, hereby ENACTS and ORDAINS as follows:

SECTION 1. DEFINITIONS

The following words and phrases, when used in this Ordinance shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context or language clearly indicates or requires a different meaning:

- a. **COLLECTOR** – The Berks Earned Income Tax Bureau and/or or such other person or public or private agency appointed in the future by Resolution of the Township authorized to collect and administer the tax herein imposed.
- b. **DCED** – The Department of Community and Economic Development of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
- c. **EARNED INCOME** – The compensation required to be reported as determined by the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue pursuant to Section 303 of the Tax Reform Code of 1971, as amended, and rules and regulations promulgated thereunder. Employee business expenses as reported or determined by the Department of Revenue under Article III of the Tax Reform Code shall constitute allowable deductions in determining earned income. The Term does not include offsets for business losses. The amount of any housing allowance provided to a member of the clergy shall not be taxable as earned income.

- d. **EMPLOYER** – An individual, sole proprietor, partnership, limited partnership, association, corporation, Limited Liability Company, Limited Liability Partnership or other entity that engages the services of any individual and makes payment to said individual whether by salary, wages or commission. An employer shall include a self-employed person who engages in his employ the services of one or more individuals, besides himself. For purposes of penalties under this Ordinance, the term includes a corporate officer, general partner or manager of a Limited Liability Company.
- e. **HE, SHE HIM, or HER** – Indicates the singular and plural number, as well as male, female and neuter genders.
- f. **INDIVIDUAL** – Any person, male or female, engaged in any occupation of any nature, type or kind whatsoever within the corporate limits of the Bethel Township, whether in the employ of another or self-employed, during the calendar year.
- g. **LOCAL TAX ENABLING ACT** – The Local Tax Enabling Act, 53 P.S. § 6294.101 et seq. and any amendments thereto.
- h. **NET PROFITS** – The net income from the operation of a business, profession, or other activity, as required to be reported or determined by the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue under Section 3030 of the Tax Reform Code of 1971, as amended, and rules and regulations promulgated thereunder. The term does not include income under any of the following paragraphs:
 - 1. Income which:
 - (a) Is not paid for services provided;
 - (b) Is in the nature of earnings from an investment.
 - 2. Income which represents:
 - (a) Any gain on the sale of farm machinery,
 - (b) Any gain on the sale of livestock held for 12 months or more for draft, breeding or dairy purposes; or
 - (c) Any gain on the sale of other capital assets of a farm.
- i. **OCCUPATION** – Any trade, profession, business or undertaking of any kind or character, including services, domestic or other, earned in or performed within the corporate limits of the political subdivision for which compensation is charged or received; whether by means of salary, wages, commission or fees for services rendered.
- j. **PERSON** – A natural person.
- k. **PRIVILEGE** – The exercising or carrying on by any manner or means any occupation whatsoever, whether it be a trade, profession, business or undertaking of any type or kind carried on or performed within the corporate limits of Bethel Township for which compensation is received, whether by any means including salary, wages, fees or commissions or whether the individual be self-employed by parent for services rendered.

- l. RETURN** - All forms designated, prepared and supplied by the Collector for reporting the tax required to be deducted.
- m. TAX** - A tax of Fifty Two Dollars (\$52) per year levied on the privilege of each engagement in any occupation, as heretofore defined, within the corporate limits of Bethel Township, during each calendar year. This tax is in addition to all other taxes of any kind or nature heretofore levied by the political subdivision. This tax may be used for the following purposes as the same may be allocated by Bethel Township from time to time: emergency services, which shall include emergency medical services, police services and/or fire services; road construction and/or maintenance; reduction of property taxes; or property tax relief through implementation of a homestead and farmstead exclusion in accordance with 53 Pa.C.S., Ch.85, Subch.F (relating to homestead property exclusion). The Township shall use no less than 25% of the funds derived from the tax for emergency services.
- n. TAX YEAR** - The period from January 1 through December 31 each year; a calendar year.
- o. TOWNSHIP** - The Township of Bethel, Berks County, Pennsylvania.

SECTION 2. IMPOSITION OF TAX

A Local Services Tax is hereby assessed and imposed for calendar year 2019 and for each calendar year thereafter on each individual who engages in any occupation within the corporate boundaries of Bethel Township Berks County Pa during the tax year. Each person who exercises such privilege for any length of time during any tax year shall pay the tax for that year assessed on a pro rata basis, in accordance with the provisions of this ordinance. This tax is in addition to all other taxes of any kind or nature heretofore levied by the Township.

SECTION 3. AMOUNT OF TAX

The amount of the Local Services Tax imposed by this Ordinance is \$52.00 Dollars lawful money of the United States of America. The tax shall be no more than Fifty Two Dollars (\$52.00) on each person for each calendar year, irrespective of the number of other political subdivisions within which a person may be employed.

SECTION 4. DUTY OF EMPLOYERS

- A.** Each employer within the Township, as well as those employers situated outside the Township but who engage in business within the Township, is hereby charged with the duty of collecting the tax from each employee engaged by him or performing for him within the Township and making a return and payment thereof to the Collector. Further, each employer is hereby authorized to deduct this tax for each employee in his or her employ, whether said employee is paid by salary, wage or commission and whether or not all such services are performed within the Township.

- B. A person subject to the tax shall be assessed by the employer a pro rata share of the tax for each payroll period in which the person is engaging in an occupation. The pro rata share of the tax assessed on the person for a payroll period shall be determined by dividing the rate of the tax levied for the calendar year by the number of payroll periods established by the employer for the calendar year. For purposes of determining the pro rata share, an employer shall round down the amount of the tax collected each payroll period to the nearest one-hundredth of a dollar. Collection of the tax shall be made on a payroll period basis for each payroll period in which the person is engaging in an occupation, except as provided in Paragraph D of this Section. For purposes of this paragraph, combined rate shall mean the aggregate annual rate of the tax levied by the school district and the Township.
- C. No person shall be subject to the payment of the local services tax by more than one political subdivision during each payroll period.
- D. In the case of concurrent employment, an employer shall refrain from withholding the tax if the employee provides a recent pay statement from a principal employer that includes the name of the employer, the length of the payroll period and the amount of the tax withheld, and the employee provides a statement that the provided pay statement is from the employee's principal employer and that the employee will notify other employers of a change in principal place of employment within two (2) weeks of any such change. The employee's statement shall be provided on the form approved by DCED.
- E. The tax shall be Fifty Two Dollars (\$52) on each person for each calendar year, irrespective of the number of political subdivisions within which a person may be employed. The political subdivision shall provide a taxpayer a receipt of payment upon request by the taxpayer.
- F. No employer shall be held liable for failure to withhold the tax or for the payment of the withheld tax funds to the Township if the failure to withhold taxes arises from incorrect information submitted by the employee. An employer shall not be liable for payment of the local services tax in an amount exceeding the amount withheld by the employer if the employer complies with the provisions of this Ordinance and remits the amount so withheld in accordance with this article.
- G. Employers shall be required to remit the local services taxes thirty (30) days after the end of each quarter of a calendar year.

SECTION 5. EXEMPTIONS AND REFUNDS

A. Exemption.

- (1) Any person whose total earned income and net profits from all sources within the political subdivision is less than Twelve Thousand Dollars (\$12,000) for any

calendar year in which the tax is levied is exempt from payment of the tax for that calendar year. In addition, the following persons are exempt from payment of the tax:

- (2) Any person who has served in any war or armed conflict in which the United States was engaged and is honorably discharged or released under honorable circumstances from active service if, as a result of military service, the person is blind, paraplegic or double/quadruple amputee, or has a service-connected disability declared by the United States Veterans' Administration or its successor to be a total one hundred percent (100%) disability.
- (3) Any person who serves as a member of a reserve component of the armed forces and is called to active at any time during the taxable year. For the purposes of this subparagraph, "reserve component of the armed forces" shall mean the United States Army Reserve, United States Navy Reserve, United States Marine Corps Reserve, United States Coast Guard Reserve, United States Air Force Reserve, the Pennsylvania Army National Guard or the Pennsylvania Air National Guard.

B. Procedure to Claim Exemption.

- (1) A person seeking to claim an exemption from the local services tax may annually file an exemption certificate with the Collector or with the person's employer affirming that the person reasonably expects to receive earned income and net profits from all sources within the Township of less than Twelve Thousand Dollars (\$12,000) in the calendar year for which the exemption certificate is filed. The exemption certificate shall have attached to it a copy of all the employee's last pay stubs showing year to date amounts or W-2 forms from employment within the political subdivision for the year prior to the fiscal year for which the employee is requesting to be exempted from the tax. Upon receipt of the exemption certificate and until otherwise instructed by the political subdivision or except as required by clause (2), the employer shall not withhold the tax from the person during the calendar year or the remainder of the calendar year for which the exemption certificate applies. Employers shall ensure that the exemption certificate forms are readily available to employees at all times and shall furnish each new employee with a form at the time of hiring. The exemption certificate form shall be the uniform form provided by the political subdivision.
- (2) With respect to a person who claims an exemption from the tax for a given calendar year, upon notification to an employer by the person or by the political subdivision that the person has received earned income and net profits from all sources within the political subdivision equal to or in excess of Twelve Thousand Dollars (\$12,000) in that calendar year or that the person is otherwise ineligible for the tax exemption for that calendar year, or upon an employer's payment to the person of earned income within the municipality in an amount equal to or in excess of Twelve Thousand Dollars (\$12,000) in that calendar year, an employer shall withhold the local services tax from the person under clause (3).

- (3) If a person who claimed an exemption from the tax for a given calendar year becomes subject to the tax for the calendar year under clause (2), the employer shall withhold the tax for the remainder of that calendar year. The employer shall withhold from the person, for the first payroll period after receipt of the notification under clause (2), a lump sum equal to the amount of tax that was not withheld from the person due to the exemption claimed by the person under this subsection plus the per payroll amount due for that first payroll period. The amount of tax withheld per payroll period for the remaining payroll periods in that calendar year shall be the same amount withheld for other employees. In the event the employment of a person subject to withholding of the tax under this clause is subsequently severed in that calendar year, the person shall be liable for any outstanding balance of tax due, and the political subdivision may pursue collection under this article.
- (4) Except as provided in clause (2), it is the intent of this subsection that employers shall not be responsible for investigating exemption certificates, monitoring tax exemption eligibility or exempting any employee from the local services tax.

C. Refunds.

The Township shall establish procedures for the processing of refund claims for any tax paid by any person who is eligible for exemption, which procedures shall be in accord with provisions of the general municipal law relating to refunds of overpayments and interest on overpayments. Refunds made within seventy-five (75) days of a refund request or seventy-five (75) days after the last day the employer is required to remit the tax for the last quarter of the calendar year, whichever is later, shall not be subject to interest. No refunds shall be made for amounts overpaid in a calendar year that do not exceed One Dollar (\$1). The Township shall determine eligibility for exemption and provide refunds to exempt persons.

SECTION 6. RETURNS

Each employer shall prepare and file a return showing a computation of the tax on forms to be supplied to the employer by the Township or the Collector. If an employer fails to file the return and pay the tax, whether or not the employer makes collection thereof from the salary, wages or commissions paid by him or her to an employee, except as provided hereafter in this article, the employer shall be responsible for the payment of the tax in full as though the tax had been originally levied against the employer.

SECTION 7. DATES FOR DETERMINING TAX LIABILITY AND PAYMENT

In each tax year, each employer shall use his or her employment records to determine the number of employees from who such tax shall be deducted and paid over to the Collector on or before the thirtieth (30th) day following the end of each calendar quarter of each such tax year.

SECTION 8. SELF-EMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS

Each self-employed individual who performs services of any type or kind of who engages in any occupation or profession with a primary place of employment within the Township shall be required to comply with this article and pay the pro rata portion of the tax due to the Collector on or before the thirtieth (30th) day following the end of each quarter.

SECTION 9. INDIVIDUALS ENGAGED IN MORE THAN ONE OCCUPATION OR EMPLOYERS IN MORE THAN ONE POLITICAL SUBDIVISION

A. The situs of the tax shall be the place of employment on the first day the person becomes subject to the tax during each payroll period. In the event a person is engaged in more than one occupation, also known as concurrent employment, or an occupation which requires the person working in more than one political subdivision during a payroll period, the priority of claim to collection the local services tax shall be in the following order:

- (1) First, the political subdivision in which the person maintains his or her principal office or is principally employed;
- (2) Second, the political subdivision in which the person resides and works if the tax is levied by that political subdivision;
- (3) Third, the political subdivision in which a person is employed and which imposed the tax nearest in miles to the person's home.

In case of dispute, a tax receipt of the taxing authority for that calendar year declaring that the taxpayer has made prior payment constitutes prima facie certification of payment to all other political subdivisions.

SECTION 10. NONRESIDENTS SUBJECT TO TAX

All employers and self-employed individuals residing or having their places of business outside of the political subdivision but who perform services of any type or kind or engage in any occupation or profession within the political subdivision do, by virtue thereof, agree to be bound by and subject themselves to the provisions, penalties and regulations promulgated under this ordinance with the same force and effect as though they were residents of the political subdivision. Further, any individual engaged in an occupation within the Township and an employee of a nonresidential employer may, for the purpose of this Section, be considered a self-employed person, and in the event his or her tax is not paid, the Township shall have the option of proceeding against either the employer or employee for the collection of this tax as hereunder provided.

SECTION 11. ADMINISTRATION OF TAX

- A. It shall be the duty of the Collector to accept and receive payments of this tax and to keep a record thereof showing the amount received by him from each employer or self-employed person, together with the date the tax was received.
- B. The Collector is hereby charged with the administration and enforcement of this Section and is hereby charged and empowered, to proscribe, adopt and promulgate rules and regulations relating to any matter pertaining to the administration and enforcement of this ordinance, including provisions for the examination of payroll records of any employer subject to this article, including provisions for the examination and correction of any return made in compliance with this ordinance and any payment alleged or found to be incorrect or as to which overpayment is claimed or found to have occurred. Any person aggrieved by any decision of the Collector shall have the right to appeal consistent with the Local Taxpayers Bill of Rights Act 50 of 1998.
- C. The Collector is hereby authorized to examine the books and payroll records of any employer in order to verify the accuracy of any return made by an employer or, if no return was made, to ascertain the tax due. Each employer is hereby directed and required to give the Collector the means, facilities and opportunity for such examination.

SECTION 12. SUITS FOR COLLECTION

- A. In the event that any tax under this Ordinance remains due or unpaid thirty (30) days after the due date(s) as set forth above, the Collector may sue for the recovery of any such tax due or unpaid under this article, together with interest and penalty.
- B. If for any reason the tax is not paid when due, interest at the rate of six percent (6%) on the amount of such tax shall be calculated beginning with the due date of the tax and a penalty of five percent (5%) shall be added to the flat rate for nonpayment thereof. Where suit is brought for the recovery of this tax or other appropriate remedy undertaken, the individual liable therefore shall, in addition, be responsible and liable for costs of collection, including attorneys' fees.

SECTION 13. VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES

- A. In the event any person makes any false or untrue statement on any return required by this ordinance, refuses inspection of the books, records or accounts in his or her custody and/or control setting forth the number of employees subject to this tax who are in his or her employment, or fails or refuses to file any return required by this article, said person shall be guilty of a violation and, upon conviction thereof, shall be sentenced to pay a fine of not more than Six Hundred Dollars (\$600) and costs of prosecution, and, in default of payment of such fine and costs, to imprisonment for not more than thirty (30) days. The action to enforce the penalty herein prescribed

may be instituted against any employer and any person in charge of the business of any employer who shall have failed or who refuses to file a return required by this article.

- B. This Ordinance shall be enforced by a civil enforcement proceeding before a Magisterial District Judge. The civil enforcement proceeding and may be initiated by the Collector and/or the Solicitor for Bethel Township by a complaint or by such other means as may be provided by the Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure.
- C. In addition, in lieu of civil actions before a Magisterial District Judge, Bethel Township may enforce violations of this ordinance in equity.

SECTION 14. INTERPRETATION

- A. Nothing contained in this Ordinance shall be construed to empower Bethel Township to levy and collect the tax hereby imposed on any occupation not within the taxing power of Bethel Township under the Constitution of the United States and the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
- B. If the tax hereby imposed under the provisions of this article shall be held by any court of competent jurisdiction to be in violation of the Constitution of the United States or of the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as to any individual, the decision of the court shall not affect or impair the right to impose or collect said tax or the validity of the tax so imposed on other persons or individuals as herein provided.

SECTION 15. SEVERABILITY

In the event any provision, section, sentence, clause or portion of this Ordinance is held to invalid or unconstitutional, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect or impair any of the remaining Ordinance. Each provision of this Ordinance is severable for this purpose. It is the intent of the Board that the remainder of this Ordinance shall remain in full force and effect notwithstanding the fact that any such portion thereof shall be invalid or unconstitutional.

SECTION 16. REPEALER

All Ordinances and/or parts of Ordinances inconsistent with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed in so far, but only in so far as the same are in direct conflict therewith.

SECTION 17. EFFECTIVE DATE

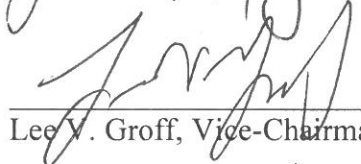
This Ordinance shall take effect five (5) days after enactment.

ORDAINED and ENACTED as an Ordinance by the Board of Supervisors of Bethel Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania in lawful session duly assembled this 18 of June, 2018.


**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF
BETHEL TOWNSHIP**



Jacob C. Meyer, Chairman



Lee V. Groff, Vice-Chairman



Michael C. Graby, Supervisor

Attest:



Jayne K. Seifrit, Township Secretary