



News Release

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St. Cloud woman charged with multiple tax crimes

ST. PAUL, Minn. – The Minnesota Department of Revenue announced that the Stearns County Attorney's Office recently charged Bernice Aurelia Garbina, of St. Cloud, with 10 tax-related felonies.

Ms. Garbina is charged with five counts of failing to file income tax returns and five counts of failing to pay income taxes.

Ms. Garbina is alleged to have evaded paying approximately \$4,000 in Minnesota income tax by failing to file and pay for tax years 2010 through 2014, according to the complaint. The complaint states that, as a licensed Certified Public Accountant and owner of a tax preparation business, Ms. Garbina was aware of the filing requirements for Minnesota income tax returns. The complaint states that Ms. Garbina admitted that she knew when tax filings were due and did not file hers on time.

Each tax-related felony charge carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison, a \$10,000 fine, or both. Defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

Although most taxpayers comply with tax laws voluntarily, the Minnesota Department of Revenue takes enforcement action against noncompliant taxpayers to ensure that tax laws are administered fairly.

Many of the department's criminal case referrals come from citizen tips. The Minnesota Department of Revenue has a 24-hour tip line for anyone who suspects that a person or business is violating Minnesota tax laws. Local callers may dial 651-297-5195 or call toll-free by dialing 1-800-657-3500. Tips can also be submitted to the department by email at tax.fraud@state.mn.us. Tipsters may choose to remain anonymous.

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