

## News Release

CONTACT Ryan Brown  
PHONE 651-556-6397  
E-MAIL [ryan.brown@state.mn.us](mailto:ryan.brown@state.mn.us)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

April 19, 2018

Contact: Ryan Brown

[ryan.brown@state.mn.us](mailto:ryan.brown@state.mn.us)

### **Blaine man charged with tobacco-related tax crime**

**ST. PAUL, Minn.** – The Minnesota Department of Revenue announced that the Ramsey County Attorney’s Office recently charged Talib Ruhaimain Gara Al-Tamar, of Blaine, with one count of possessing unstamped cigarettes and untaxed tobacco products.

According to the complaint, during an inspection of Mr. Al-Tamar’s retail store, Blue Store St. Paul, in June 2017, department investigators seized more than \$4,200 worth of unstamped cigarettes and untaxed tobacco products. Mr. Al-Tamar was unable to provide invoices showing that the products were purchased from a licensed distributor. The complaint states that Mr. Al-Tamar claimed to have purchased the products at Sam’s Club; however, Sam’s Club’s invoices and other records did not corroborate his claim. The complaint further alleges that Mr. Al-Tamar owes over \$943,000 in taxes, penalties, and interest from the two years he held a tobacco distributors license but did not pay the taxes owed on tobacco products. It also states that Mr. Al-Tamar was found to be in possession of 12,340 unstamped cigarettes and more than \$1,100 in untaxed tobacco products during an inspection in November 2016.

Each tax-related felony charge carries a maximum penalty of 5 years in prison, a \$10,000 fine, or both. Defendants are presumed to be innocent unless and until proven guilty.

This is an example of the department’s ongoing efforts to uniformly enforce the state’s cigarette and tobacco laws. For more information on the tax laws related to tobacco products in Minnesota, [visit our website](#).

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.

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 via email at [tax.fraud@state.mn.us](mailto:tax.fraud@state.mn.us). Tipsters may choose to remain anonymous.

## News Release

CONTACT Ryan Brown  
PHONE 651-556-6397  
E-MAIL [ryan.brown@state.mn.us](mailto:ryan.brown@state.mn.us)

Get the latest news and updates from the Minnesota Department of Revenue by following the department on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) or by signing up for our [email subscription list](#).

###