



City of Seattle

Sweetened Beverage Tax

Supporting healthy food and child health and development



Beginning in 2018, Seattle started taxing sugar-sweetened beverage products distributed within the city. The Sweetened Beverage Tax is not a sales tax charged directly on consumers. Instead, this tax makes distributors pay a tax **(of 1.75 cents per ounce)** on sugar-sweetened beverage products they distribute within the City of Seattle.

Consumers may notice an increase in the prices of sugary drinks. Studies in Seattle show that distributors and retailers are passing the Sweetened Beverage Tax on to consumers by raising the prices of sugary drinks. In fact, distributors and retailers are passing on nearly all of the tax (97 percent) through higher in-store prices.

Why did Seattle pass this tax?

This tax was designed to improve the health of Seattle residents by reducing the sales and consumption of sugary drinks. In addition, the tax revenue is being used to support healthy food access and early learning programs. Research has shown that sugary drinks can lead to long-term weight gain, which can increase risk of developing **type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease**. Sugary drinks also lead to cavities. A 20-ounce bottle of soda can pack over 15 teaspoons of added sugar and over 250 calories with poor nutritional value.

What beverages are taxed?



Regular sodas



Fruit drinks



Energy and sports drinks



Sweetened waters



Sweetened coffees and teas



Syrups and concentrates

20 OZ SODA has

15

TEASPOONS

of added sugar and

250

EMPTY CALORIES

AND JUST 1-2 CANS A DAY

INCREASES RISK OF
TYPE 2 DIABETES

26%

THE TAX DOES NOT APPLY TO:



Diet drinks, bottled water, 100% juice, milk (including plant-based), powders and concentrates mixed by the end consumers, beverages for medical use, infant or baby formula, and alcoholic beverages.

Where is the money going?

The Sweetened Beverage Tax is being used to support and expand programs that increase access to healthy food and support child health, development, and readiness for school.

Food Access

53%



Increasing access to healthy food

The revenue is expanding support for food banks and programs that increase fruits and vegetables offered in child care, preschools, schools, and after school. Funds also expanded *Fresh Bucks*, which helps people on a tight budget afford healthy food.



Community-based meal programs

The revenue is expanding support for programs that serve nutritious meals, deliver groceries, and provide food and nutrition education to low-income families and older people at a variety of sites throughout Seattle.

Child Health and Early Learning

43%



High-quality child care

The revenue supports child care subsidies for working families. Funds also expanded health, training and program quality support to child care providers.



Family support programs

The revenue supports home visiting programs and provide new support services for children with developmental delays.

Tax Administration

4%



A small portion of the revenue supports the administration of the Sweetened Beverage Tax Community Advisory Board. Funds also support a five-year evaluation to study the effects of the tax on economic outcomes and health behaviors.

In 2019, the Sweetened Beverage Tax is providing

\$18.3M

to support healthy food access, child health and early learning, and tax administration

