



Sales and Use Tax Division
North Carolina Department of Revenue
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Rate and Boundary Database Information

The Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement requires each state to provide and maintain a boundary database containing the five and nine-digit zip codes within their state. North Carolina has chosen to also include information at the street address level. States are required to provide and maintain a rate database containing the sales and use tax rates applicable to sales made or delivered within the state. These databases are used together to determine the proper rate of sales or use tax to be charged based on the sourcing of the purchase.

Both databases include Federal Information Processing Standards Codes ("FIPS codes"). FIPS codes are a standardized set of numeric or alphabetic codes issued by the National Institute of Standards and Technology to ensure uniform identification of geographic entities including: states, counties, named populated and related location entities, and American Indian and Alaska Native areas.

The Boundary Database contains three types of records: address, five-digit zip code, and zip plus four. These records are queried with the most detailed level of information provided by the user. Once the corresponding record is located in the Boundary Database, it returns the FIPS State Code, FIPS County Code, FIPS Place Code, FIPS Place Class Code, and any Special Tax District Codes ("Jurisdictional Information") associated with the address, zip, or zip plus four record.

Using the Jurisdictional Information from the Boundary Database and a sale's date, the Rate Database is queried to determine the applicable rate(s). The tax due is computed using all of the applicable rate(s).

Both databases are provided on the Department's website in a comma separated value (CSV) format. The Boundary Database is updated quarterly, at least 30 days prior to the effective date of the database. For State rate changes, the Rate Database is updated once the effective date of a State rate change is known and is limited to the first of a calendar quarter. For local rate changes, the Rate Database is updated with a minimum of sixty days' notice to retailers prior to the first day of a calendar quarter.

Liability relief is granted to retailers for erroneous information in the Boundary and Rate Databases and insufficient notice of changes to the Boundary and Rate Databases in accordance with N.C. Gen. Stat. § 105-164.42L.

Detailed information about the development of the databases and additional guidance can be found in the [SST Technology Guide](#) on the Streamlined Sales Tax Governing Board, Inc. website below, "For Businesses".