

**CONFIDENTIAL
GCPE-FIN ISSUE NOTE**

Ministry of Finance
RECORD OPR: GCPE-FIN
Date: Jan. 29, 2019 DRAFT

Minister Responsible: Carole James

**Speculation and Vacancy
Tax: Call Wait Times**

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- We are aware of the higher call wait times on the speculation and vacancy tax phone line and we are addressing it.
- I encourage homeowners to declare online at www.gov.bc.ca/spectax. It's fast, easy and secure.
- Anyone with questions, or requiring assistance in other languages can still call, and request a call-back from our agents.
- The call centre is open Monday to Sunday, 8am to 8pm; agents are available to assist you or email us.

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- This is a new tax, and homeowners understandably have questions and want to ensure they declare by the deadline.
- We put the call centre in place to ensure people can get the help and answers they need to complete the declaration.

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- We have increased our staffing and we've provided a call-back option so no one wait on the phone, they will not lose their place in queue.
- I encourage homeowners to declare online – it's fast, easy and secure.

BACKGROUND:

The speculation and vacancy tax call centre (Tier 1) has been experiencing higher than expected call volumes. Average wait times are above the service delivery standard of 4 mins.

24 more staff are being trained to support the call centre.

So far, approximately 560,000 letters (of 1.6 million total) have been delivered to Canada Post and have or will be in people's mailboxes inviting them to declare.

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Commented [MP1]: What was yesterday's total?

The speculation and vacancy phone number is 1-833-554-2323. Call centre staff can answer questions, help people complete their declaration over the phone and provide support for non-English speakers. The call centre is open Monday to Sunday, 8am to 8pm.

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