

Rhonda Skipper



Walton County Tax Collector

"Commitment to Service"

For Immediate Release

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TAX COLLECTOR'S OFFICE NO LONGER ACCEPTING VISA CARDS

DeFuniak Springs, FL (April 30, 2009) – As of May 1, VISA cards are no longer accepted at the Walton County Tax Collector's Office due to restrictions placed on government agencies by VISA.

VISA is requiring government agencies, including the Tax Collector's Office, to sign merchant agreements that would force them to pass on VISA's charges to all customers, not just those who are using their credit cards at the counter.

MasterCard, American Express & Discover continue to be accepted by the Tax Collector's Office at the counter, through the mail, telephone and online at www.waltontaxcollector.com. Because of VISA's order, the Tax Collector's Office will no longer be able to accept VISA debit or credit cards for any transactions.

Tax Collector Rhonda Skipper said "It is the policy of my office that if a customer wants to have the convenience of using a credit card or debit card, then the card holder, not all tax payers, should bear those additional costs. VISA's policy would require all tax payers to share the cost of using their card and I simply cannot pass those fees on to all customers."

The State of Florida has already weighed in on this issue by authorizing governing agencies conducting state business to accept credit and debit card payments and charge a convenience fee that is collected by a third party payment processor. MasterCard, American Express & Discover have not expressed any objections to the current arrangement and continue to be accepted for all transaction types.

"When I dine out and pay with cash, I know the price includes additional costs that allow someone else to use their VISA card. As Tax Collector, I can't do that. I am unable to add a little more onto everyone's tax bill to cover the other customer's VISA costs," said Skipper.

"Our office tried to work out an agreement that would allow us to continue taking VISA, however, VISA's rigid policy and unwillingness to work within my obligations to the taxpayers of Walton County, has resulted in us no longer being able to process VISA cards," said Skipper. "I realize this is an inconvenience to our customers and would encourage those who are VISA cardholders to contact VISA directly."

North Walton Branch

PO Box 510
DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435
P: 850.892.8121
F: 850.892.8079

Florida Residents

Call toll-free
800.342.0141

South Walton

Courthouse Annex
31 Coastal Centre Blvd., Ste. 700
Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459
P: 850.267.3001
F: 850.267.4599

www.waltontaxcollector.com

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Customers can speak directly with VISA by calling (800) VISA-911 or via email at askvisa@visa.com.

“VISA it’s everywhere you want to be except government agencies,” said Skipper.

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