



CITY OF ALLENTOWN

No. _____

RESOLUTION

R167 - 2024

Introduced by the Administration on October 2, 2024

Calls for the online submission, on the City-operated filing website, of all NIZ (Neighborhood Improvement Zone) tax filings from all business owners, parcel owners, contractors, arena businesses, and all others required by the NIZ legislation to file by January 31st of each year. The website URL is "nizfiling.allentownpa.gov".

Resolved by the Council of the City of Allentown, That

WHEREAS, the City of Allentown has commissioned the construction and development of a City-operated website for the purposes of improving the filing and certification process for both the taxpayers and City users.

WHEREAS, the City of Allentown piloted the use of the website during the 2023 – 2024 program year, and successfully remitted the certified local NIZ taxes to the State by the mandatory deadline.

WHEREAS, by submitting the NIZ local tax report filing on the City-operated website, the data is kept in a central location that is able to be reviewed by the taxpayer year over year.

WHEREAS, by directing the submission of all NIZ tax filings to be completed on the website, nizfiling.allentownpa.gov, the City will experience savings in time, reduction of human error, reduction of data entry, increased reporting accuracy, increased data security, mitigation of single-point-of-failure risk, and other benefits in regards to a more automated process.

WHEREAS, the City of Allentown seeks to follow the footsteps of the State Department of Revenue by moving the report filing to an all-online submissions platform, and take steps to create a more automated, digital, and online process.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Allentown, hereby authorizes the City Department of Finance to direct the submission of all NIZ local tax filings to be completed online on the City-operated website with the current URL: nizfiling.allentownpa.gov.

Legislative Template

- What department or bureau is this bill originating from? Where did the initiative for the bill originate?

Finance Budget Administration - NIZ Filing and Certification Process Improvements.

- Summary and facts of the bill.

The City is calling for all mandated filers within the NIZ zone to file the annual NIZ taxes online only through our website, <https://nizfiling.allentownpa.gov>. The City's NIZ website was successful in accommodating 76% of the total NIZ business, parcel owner, and contractor filings last year during its piloting program year. The remaining 24% were received in physical submission by mail, email, or hand delivery. These filings had to be manually data entered, record counted, and archived separately. Filing through the website maximizes efficiency in time, reduces errors, and maintains uniform data input formats and central database storage.

- Purpose – Please include the following in your explanation:
 - a. What does the bill do? What are the specific goals or tasks the bill seeks to accomplish?

This bill aims to move the medium of filing to our online digital platform that is able to read the data and automate a significant portion of the NIZ certification process. By directing online submission through the website, <https://nizfiling.allentownpa.gov/>, it will reduce time, errors, and overhead cost to fulfill the NIZ legislation requirements.

- b. What are the benefits of doing this?

This will eliminate the data entry phase (reduction in time and human error) which took roughly 2 weeks, or about 50% of the time the City is allotted to certify the NIZ taxes (month of February). No apparent drawbacks.

Standardize and make uniform the filing process, centralize the database of records, provide more security to the taxpayer data transmission, and allow filers to look back at prior years of filing in one central location.

- c. How does this bill relate to the City's vision/mission/priorities?

The City and the State are moving to a more digital and online world. This serves to utilize technology to maximize efficiency and reduce friction in the filing process for all stakeholders. This will also make the filing process easier for the business owners year over year.

- Financial Impact – Please include the following in your explanation:

- a. Cost (initial and ongoing)

No cost for this resolution. The website was already constructed and some yearly maintenance and support are the ongoing cost. However, this resolution does not require funding.

- b. Benefits (initial and ongoing)

This will reduce the overhead cost of the resources spent on certifying the NIZ taxes. Overall, the City will save money and resources by requiring online submission.

- Funding Sources – Please include the following in your explanation:
 - a. If transferring funds, please make sure to give specific account names and numbers. If appropriating funds from a grant, please list the agency awarding the grant.

No transfer needed.

- Priority status – Are there any deadlines to be aware of?

Normal priority. NIZ program year opens again in November.

- Why should Council unanimously support this bill?

This will save the City resources over time, provide more accurate data to remit to the State, and create a more automated process for the filers and City users. The City should make efforts to advance to automation and digitalization.