

Case Study: Business Tax Revenue Administration

HdL Eases the Burden of Tax and Licensing Compliance for Georgia Municipalities



Tax and licensing compliance and administration often require resources and risks that stretch the capacity of municipalities. HdL Companies has helped governments throughout Georgia administer taxes fairly and efficiently, educate businesses, and access resources while finding and recovering millions in tax revenue. Read below to see how HdL was able to assist the City of Chamblee, Henry County and the City of Peachtree Corners.

CHAMBLEE

Chamblee is a suburb of Atlanta that continues to grow in size, population, and wealth year after year since its founding in 1908. It is both a tourist and film industry destination. During 2020-2021, at the height of the pandemic, the city experienced challenges managing licensing processes that relied heavily on in-person meetings and mail services. The problem was compounded by increased call volume that greatly exceeded staff resources.

Assistant City Manager Kirsten Gorham reached out to HdL to create a streamlined, systematic process to move businesses through the administrative process of licensing. She stated, "HdL gave us the opportunity to conduct process improvement and analysis in the way we do business, as well as better adapting to the needs of our business community in a post-pandemic environment."

HdL's Operations Manager Michelle Godfrey explains, "Part of the reason Chamblee contacted us is that HdL has a full suite of administrative services. We decrease operating costs while increasing revenue and customer service, and we free internal staff resources to do more than data entry." Those services meant HdL was able to administer more than 2,500 accounts covering massagelicensees, alcohol licenses and occupation taxes for Chamblee, bringing in more than \$3 million in revenue.

Now HdL's support center provides information and assistance to taxpayers 5 days a week, even when Chamblee's offices are closed, and allows businesses to remit their taxes online from anywhere, a service Chamblee could not provide before. Because occupation taxes alone require multiple touch points for compliance with both state and local regulations, the support center stresses education and the removal of obstacles and hurdles. HdL gives businesses the services they need to become fully compliant as well as reducing the burden on municipal staff.

Given HdL's in-depth experience with a wide range of accounts, Chamblee's officials know the company can offer ideas, answer questions and resolve issues as the city's needs continue to evolve, and that translates into higher and more dependable revenue. According to Gorham, HdL has given Chamblee the opportunity to, "Provide customers with a better, more accessible experience doing business with the city. HdL's team have been extraordinarily helpful. They truly work as an extension of the city staff."

HENRY COUNTY

While HdL is able to offer a full suite of services, sometimes an agency simply needs better software. Henry County fell into that category. During an HdL presentation at the Georgia Association of Business Tax Officials (GABTO), a representative from Henry County reached out to HdL for more information about the company's software for revenue administration, including managing revenue collection and assisting with long-range fiscal planning.



HdL's software has been specifically designed from the ground up to efficiently navigate the complexities of government revenue programs. Godfrey states, "We consider our clients to be our collaborators. They tell us exactly what they need for revenue administration and we constantly refine our software to match those needs and to efficiently integrate with their other systems. We develop software with the same attention to customer relationships, ease of use, and fiscal responsibility that is apparent in all our services."

According to Lynn Carty, Deputy Tax Commissioner, "The HdL system is very user friendly. It has many unique features other systems don't offer but should. HdL staff has always been supportive, and we continue to learn new ways to make our office more efficient with online processes."

The ability to save time and use data more effectively coupled with superior customer service is why over 500 agencies have continued to use HdL software for decades.

PEACHTREE CORNERS

Peachtree Corners is a young, entrepreneurial city less than 30 minutes from downtown Atlanta. The term young applies in every way, from the average age of its citizens (36.5 years) to the date of its founding (2012). Even experienced cities find licensing issues daunting, but in this case the problem was compounded because businesses in Peachtree Corners had been used to dealing directly with the County. Although their noncompliance with city business regulations was understandable, it was also rampant, costing the city significant lost revenue.

Peachtree Corners turned to HdL to identify noncompliant businesses, get them into the city's system, and track them. In addition, the city expected the work to be conducted in a way that strengthened relationships between the businesses and the city and incentivized compliance.

Finance Director Cory Sally explained, "When HdL employees are out in the field, they are representatives of the city. As such, it is paramount that they provide an extremely high level of customer service to the business. I have found that HdL does an excellent job of learning the city's code and processes so they can explain those properly to businesses. I have worked with several different HdL employees on various projects, and I have found them all to be competent, courteous and easy to work with."

HdL has brought 265 businesses into compliance which is a 12% increase and recovered over \$1.3 million in revenue. HdL has seen similar results for municipalities throughout Georgia and in many other states. Godfrey states, "Most cities can't go out to find noncompliance due to budget and staff constraints. We find noncompliant business and guide them to compliance, increasing the city's reach."

Sally summarized the benefits of working with the firm, "HdL exhibits outstanding customer service both with the city staff and the businesses. HdL makes the process of collecting and remitting revenue painless."

THE SUCCESSES

HdL was founded by local government finance professionals with the singular mission of helping local government leaders maximize their revenue sources. The HdL Team includes experienced business tax department supervisors, certified revenue officers and local government leaders who have served at all levels of local and state municipal organizations. Having walked in your shoes, the HdL team is uniquely prepared to help achieve your strategic goals.

Cities and counties across the nation have benefited from HdL's extensive resources and expertise for over 37 years. HdL is proud to be a corporate sponsor of the following organizations:

- Georgia Association of Business Tax Officials
- Georgia City-County Management Association League of California Cities
- California State Association of Counties
- California Society of Municipal Finance Officers
- California Municipal Revenue and Tax Association
- Municipal Management Association of Northern California
- Municipal Management Association of Southern California
- Alabama League of Municipalities
- Colorado Municipal League
- Colorado City and County Management Association
- Colorado Government Finance Officers Association
- Texas Municipal League
- Government Finance Officers Association of Texas
- Texas City Management Association

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