



*Tony Evers*  
Governor

*Peter W. Barca*  
Secretary of Revenue

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CONTACT: Patty Mayers, Communications Director  
(608) 266-2300 or [DORCommunications@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DORCommunications@wisconsin.gov)

## **DOR uses virtual tools to reach Wisconsinites during pandemic**

Communication and education are core to Wisconsin Department of Revenue's (DOR) mission. Agency representatives travel the state year-round speaking to groups about what DOR does, the policies and tax laws it administers for the state, and services it provides to Wisconsin residents. [Juan Carlos Reyes](#) is among those DOR representatives speaking to groups and meeting with people one-on-one.

"Traveling the state is an opportunity to meet in-person with taxpayers to answer their questions and hear their concerns," says Reyes who manages DOR outreach for Wisconsin's Spanish-speaking communities. He spends much of his workdays, including many weekends, traveling to cities throughout the state sharing what DOR does, answering citizen's questions and hearing their concerns.

Reyes finds joy in helping people at these events, so when several sessions canceled this year due to the pandemic, he knew he needed an alternate plan. Working with DOR partners at the Consulate of Mexico in Milwaukee and the Latino Chamber of Commerce in Madison, Reyes said they were able to schedule virtual events to replace those canceled.

This year Reyes will do five virtual presentations in Spanish for [National Financial Education Week](#), November 4-18. The most important financial education event of the year, promoted by the government of Mexico with the participation of all Consulates of Mexico in the United States, it is the meeting point for the efforts made in financial education by public, private, social and educational institutions.

"Our presentations explain who the Department of Revenue is, and our service to the state and the people of Wisconsin," says Reyes. Topics covered at the newly scheduled virtual events include:

- navigating the DOR website;
- how to connect with a DOR representative by email, phone or in-person appointment;
- importance of timely tax return filing;
- availability of free volunteer tax preparation services;
- registering a new business; and
- employment opportunities for Spanish speaking persons.

Answering questions and speaking with people one-on-one is part of these events that Reyes says they carried into the virtual realm through chat and other messaging applications. While he enjoys meeting in-person to discuss personal matters, he says working through an issue over a phone call or email are equally as effective and in some ways even more convenient.

"I share my email and our customer service contact information during the virtual presentations, so they can contact me or one of our tax specialists any time." The agency's Customer Service Bureau has several specialists fluent in Spanish as well as Hmong and several other languages.

"We are fortunate to have Juan and so many others here at DOR who make it possible during this time to continue reaching the people of Wisconsin with information they need," says DOR Secretary Peter Barca. "We are all in this together and we will get through this together."

Barca says the virtual technology filling the need to stay connected is a positive product of this trying time and they expect to continue using it long after the pandemic is gone to reach persons unable to attend in-person events.

"We've opened a new door here and we will use it to expand our reach to connect with Wisconsinites moving forward. The better everyone understands DOR, who we are and what we do, and the better we understand Wisconsinite's concerns and needs, the better we can work together."

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