

BEFORE THE TAX COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF IDAHO

In the Matter of the Protest of)	
)	DOCKET NO. 25728
[Redacted],)	
)	
Petitioners.)	DECISION
_____)	

On May 16, 2013, the Taxpayer Accounting Division of the Idaho State Tax Commission (Commission) issued a Notice of Deficiency Determination (NODD) to [Redacted] (taxpayers) proposing tax and interest for taxable year 2012 in the total amount of \$312.42.

The sole issue for this decision is whether the taxpayers are entitled to a dependency exemption deduction for [Redacted] daughter from a previous marriage, [Redacted]. As part of their appeal, the taxpayers provided a copy of [Redacted] Decree of Divorce issued by the Third District Court of Idaho on August 31, 2005. Item seven of the Decree, Income Tax Exemption, states that [Redacted] is assigned the dependency exemption for the minor child and that the parent not receiving the exemption shall sign the required [Redacted] form to release the claim to the exemption.

The taxpayers did not respond to a letter outlining their alternatives for redetermining a protested NODD, nor did they request a hearing. The Commission, having reviewed the file, hereby issues its decision.

Taxpayers may claim dependency exemption deductions for their dependents as defined in Internal Revenue Code (IRC) § 152. Under IRC § 152(a), the term “dependent” means a qualifying child or qualifying relative. A qualifying child is defined as an individual who (1) bears a certain relationship to the taxpayer, such as the taxpayer’s child, (2) has the same principal place of abode as the taxpayer for more than one-half of the taxable year, (3) meets

certain age requirements, and (4) has not provided over one-half of the individual's own support for the taxable year. IRC § 152(c)(1)-(3).

However, the dependency exemption, as a general rule, is limited under IRC § 152(e)(1) as follows: if the child received over one-half of his support during the calendar year from his parents who live apart at all times during the last 6 months of the calendar year and the child is in the custody of one or both parents for more than one-half of the calendar year, then the child is treated as the qualifying child of the noncustodial parent if certain requirements are met. The requirements are met if (1) the custodial parent signs a written declaration (in such manner and form as the Secretary may prescribe) that the custodial parent will not claim the child as a dependent for the taxable year; and (2) the noncustodial parent attaches the written declaration to the noncustodial parent's return for the taxable year. IRC § 152(e)(2).

The term "custodial parent" is defined in IRC § 152(e)(4)(A) as the parent having custody for the greater portion of the calendar year. The decree provided states that both parents are awarded joint legal custody of their minor child, [Redacted]. However, in response to a request for information letter that asked how many days [Redacted] lived with them during the year, the taxpayers responded 49 percent. Based on this percentage, the taxpayers would not be [Redacted] custodial parents.

An exception to the above rule is provided in IRC section 152(e)(2), is that if the parent having custody elects to release his claim to exemption for the children in his custody for the year in question and supplies a written release to that effect, and if the noncustodial parent receiving the right to claim the dependency exemption attaches such waiver to the tax return, then the waiver will be honored and the noncustodial parent may claim the dependency exemption for the child.

The Decree provides that [Redacted] is entitled to the dependency exemption for [Redacted]. However, the mere fact that the State court granted [Redacted] the right to claim the dependency exemption deduction is immaterial because a state court cannot determine issues of [Redacted] tax law. Id. See Commissioner v. Tower, 327 U.S. 280 (1946); Kenfield v. United States, 783 F.2d 966 (10th Cir.1986); Nieto v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo.1992-296.

For taxable year 2012, the taxpayers are not the custodial parents of [Redacted] and do not have a signed release from the custodial parent. Therefore, the taxpayers are not entitled to the dependency exemption.

THEREFORE, the Notice of Deficiency Determination dated May 16, 2013 and directed to [Redacted], is AFFIRMED and made final.

IT IS ORDERED that the taxpayers pay the following amount of tax and interest:

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>TAX</u>	<u>INTEREST</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
2012	\$310	\$6	\$316

Interest is calculated through November 20, 2013.

DEMAND for immediate payment of the foregoing amount is hereby made and given.

An explanation of the taxpayers' right to appeal this decision is enclosed.

DATED this _____ day of _____ 2013.

IDAHO STATE TAX COMMISSION

COMMISSIONER

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on this _____ day of _____ 2013, a copy of the within and foregoing DECISION was served by sending the same by United States mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to:

[Redacted]

Receipt No.
