

Dept. of Revenue: Merrimac man charged with filing false income tax returns

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Benjamin Schneller, 41, a Merrimac resident, is facing two felony charges in connection with filing false income tax returns and two misdemeanor charges for failing to file required income tax returns with the intent to evade Wisconsin income taxes.

According to the [criminal complaint](#), Schneller filed false income tax returns for 2014 and 2017, and failed to file tax returns for 2015 and 2016. During this time, Schneller failed to report all of his wages as an Executive Chef. Schneller did not report \$186,300 of cash payments he received during those years. The false tax returns and returns he failed to file resulted in fraudulent attempts to evade \$10,095 of Wisconsin income taxes over the four year period. Schneller said that he had not worked prior to the summer of 2017, which was when he went on the payroll in order to comply with a work release requirement stemming from a prior Operating While Intoxicated (OWI) conviction.

Criminal charges were filed on September 28, 2018 by the Dane County District Attorney's office following an investigation by the Wisconsin Department of Revenue's Office of Criminal Investigation. If convicted, Schneller could face up to 13 ½ years in prison and a \$40,000 fine.