

Extension of due date of furnishing of Income Tax Returns and Audit Reports

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In view of the challenges faced by taxpayers in meeting the statutory and regulatory compliances due to the outbreak of COVID-19, the Government brought the Taxation and Other Laws (Relaxation of Certain Provisions) Ordinance, 2020 ('the Ordinance') on 31st March, 2020 which, inter alia, extended various time limits. The Ordinance has since been replaced by the Taxation and Other Laws (Relaxation and Amendment of Certain Provisions) Act.

The Government issued a Notification on 24th June, 2020 under the Ordinance which, inter alia, extended the due date for all Income Tax Returns for the FY 2019-20 (AY 2020-21) to 30th November, 2020. Hence, the returns of income which were required to be filed by 31st July, 2020 and 31st October, 2020 are required to be filed by 30th November, 2020. Consequently, the date for furnishing various audit reports including tax audit report under the Income-tax Act, 1961 (the Act) has also been extended to 31st October, 2020.

In order to provide more time to taxpayers for furnishing of Income Tax Returns, it has been decided to further extend the due date for furnishing of Income-Tax Returns as under:

- (A) The due date for furnishing of Income Tax Returns for the taxpayers (including their partners) who are required to get their accounts audited [for whom the due date (i.e. before the extension by the said notification) as per the Act is 31st October, 2020] has been extended to 31st January, 2021.
- (B) The due date for furnishing of Income Tax Returns for the taxpayers who are required to furnish report in respect of international/specified domestic transactions [for whom the due date (i.e. before the extension by the said notification) as per the Act is 30th November, 2020] has been extended to 31st January, 2021.
- (C) The due date for furnishing of Income Tax Returns for the other taxpayers [for whom the due date (i.e. before the extension by the said notification) as per the Act was 31st July, 2020] has been extended to 31st December, 2020.

Consequently, the date for furnishing of various audit reports under the Act including tax audit report and report in respect of international/specified domestic transaction has also been extended to 31st December, 2020.

Further, in order to provide relief to small and middle class taxpayers, the said notification dated 24th June, 2020 had also extended the due date for payment of self-assessment tax for the taxpayers whose self-assessment tax liability is up to Rs. 1 lakh. Accordingly, the due date for payment of self-assessment tax for the taxpayers who are not required to get their accounts audited was extended from 31st July, 2020 to 30th November, 2020 and for the auditable cases, this due date was extended from 31st October, 2020 to 30th November, 2020.

In order to provide relief for the second time to small and middle class taxpayers in the matter of payment of self-assessment tax, the due date for payment of self-assessment tax date is hereby again being extended. Accordingly, the due date for payment of self-assessment tax for taxpayers whose self-assessment tax liability is up to Rs. 1 lakh has been extended to 31st January, 2021 for the taxpayers mentioned in para 3(A) and para 3(B) and to 31st December, 2020 for the taxpayers mentioned in para 3(C).

The necessary notification in this regard shall be issued in due course.

RM/KMN

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