



Prepare and lodge

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34595

This page contains information for registered agents about preparing and lodging tax statements and returns, including the lodgment program, tax time and product changes.

Find out about:

- [Due dates](#) – important lodgment and payment dates for 2020–21
- [Tax Time 2020](#) – what's new and what's changed
- [Lodgment program framework](#) – how we recognise and support agents who have good practice management, lodge electronically and are consistently on time
- [Tax agent lodgment program](#)
- [BAS agent lodgment program](#)
- [Managing your lodgment program](#)
- [Lodgment program deferrals](#)
- [Pre-filling service](#)

See also:

- [Interacting with us online](#)
- [Help for registered agents affected by natural disasters](#)
- [COVID-19](#)

Due dates

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Due-dates/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
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Key lodgment and payment dates for 2020–21 are:

- [July 2020](#)
- [August 2020](#)
- [September 2020](#)
- [October 2020](#)
- [November 2020](#)
- [December 2020](#)
- [January 2021](#)
- [February 2021](#)
- [March 2021](#)
- [April 2021](#)
- [May 2021](#)
- [June 2021](#)

This list of key dates is not comprehensive – it is a guide only. Events or timelines may change. Unless otherwise stated, the due dates provided are for 30 June balancers only.

When a due date falls on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday, you can lodge or pay on the next business day.

The payment due dates for a tax return are determined by client type, the lodgment due date and when the return is lodged.

July 2020

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Due-dates/July-2020/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34597

21 July

- Lodge and pay June 2020 monthly business activity statement.
- Lodge and pay quarter 4, 2019–20 *PAYG instalment activity statement* for head companies of consolidated groups.

28 July

- Lodge and pay quarter 4, 2019–20 activity statement if electing to receive and lodge by paper and not an active STP reporter.
- Pay quarter 4, 2019–20 instalment notice (form R, S or T). Lodge the notice only if you vary the instalment amount.
- Make super guarantee contributions for quarter 4, 2019–20 to funds by this date.

Employers who do not pay minimum super contributions for quarter 4 by this date must pay the super guarantee charge and lodge a *Superannuation guarantee charge statement – quarterly* (NAT 9599) by 28 August 2020.

Note: The super guarantee charge is not tax deductible.

31 July

- Lodge *TFN report* for closely held trusts if any beneficiary quoted their TFN to a trustee in quarter 4, 2019–20.
- Lodge *Venture capital deficit tax return* for June balancers.
- Lodge *Franking account return* for 30 June balancers if there is an amount payable.
- Lodge *Early stage innovation company report*.

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August 2020

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Due-dates/August-2020/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34596

14 August

- Lodge *PAYG withholding payment summary annual report* for:
 - large withholders whose annual withholding is greater than \$1 million
 - payers who have no tax agent or BAS agent involved in preparing the report.

21 August

- Lodge and pay July 2020 monthly business activity statement.

25 August

- Lodge and pay quarter 4, 2019–20 activity statement if you lodge electronically.

28 August

- Lodge and pay quarter 4, 2019–20 *Superannuation guarantee charge statement – quarterly* if the employer did not pay enough contributions on time.

Employers who lodge a *Superannuation guarantee charge statement – quarterly* can choose to offset contributions they paid late to a fund against their super guarantee charge for the quarter. They still have to pay the remaining super guarantee charge.

Note: The super guarantee charge is not tax deductible.

Use our [Super guarantee charge statement and calculator tool](#) to work out the super guarantee charge and prepare the *Superannuation guarantee charge statement – quarterly*.

- Lodge *Taxable payments annual report* (TPAR).

The [TPAR](#) tells us about payments that are made to contractors for providing services. Some government entities also need to report the grants they have paid in a TPAR.

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September 2020

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Due-dates/September-2020/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34598

21 September

- Lodge and pay August 2020 monthly business activity statement.

30 September

- Lodge PAYG withholding payment summary annual report if prepared by a BAS agent or tax agent.

If a payer has only closely held payees and their tax agent helps prepare their report, they may be eligible for a [concession](#) to lodge this report by the due date of their tax return.

- Lodge *Annual TFN withholding report 2020* if a trustee of a closely held trust has been required to withhold amounts from payments to beneficiaries.

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October 2020

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Due-dates/October-2020/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34599

21 October

- Pay annual *PAYG instalment notice* (Form N). Lodge only if you vary the instalment amount or use the rate method to calculate the instalment.
- Lodge and pay quarter 1, 2020–21 *PAYG instalment activity statement* for head companies of consolidated groups.
- Lodge and pay September 2020 monthly business activity statement.

28 October

- Lodge and pay quarter 1, 2020–21 activity statement if electing to receive and lodge by paper and not an active STP reporter. Pay quarter 1, 2020–21 instalment notice (form R, S, or T). Lodge the notice only if you vary the instalment amount.
- Make super guarantee contributions for quarter 1, 2020–21 to funds by this date.

Employers who do not pay minimum super contributions for quarter 1 by this date must pay the super guarantee charge and lodge a *Superannuation guarantee charge statement – quarterly* (NAT 9599) by 28 November 2020.

Note: The super guarantee charge is not tax deductible.

- Lodge and pay annual activity statement for TFN withholding for closely held trusts where a trustee withheld amounts from payments to beneficiaries during the 2019–20 income year.

31 October

- Final date to add new clients to your client list to ensure their 2020 tax return is covered by the lodgment program.

Note: The lodgment program is a concession to registered agents. We can ask for documents to be lodged earlier than the concessional due dates.

- Lodge tax returns for all entities if one or more prior year returns were outstanding as at 30 June 2020.

Note: This means all prior year returns must be lodged, not just the immediate prior year.

If all outstanding prior year returns have been lodged by 31 October 2020, the lodgment program due dates will apply to the 2020 tax return.

SMSFs in this category must lodge their complete *Self-managed superannuation fund annual return* by this date.

- Lodge and pay *Self-managed superannuation fund annual return* (NAT 71226) for (taxable and non-taxable) new registrant SMSF if we have advised the SMSF that the first year return has a 31 October 2020 due date.
- Lodge tax return for all entities prosecuted for non-lodgment of prior year returns and advised of a lodgment due date of 31 October 2020:
 - Some prosecuted clients may have a different lodgment due date – refer to the letter you received for the applicable due date.
 - Payment (if required) for individuals and trusts in this category is due as advised in their notice of assessment.
 - Payment (if required) for companies and super funds in this category is due on 1 December 2020.

SMSFs in this category must lodge their complete *Self-managed superannuation fund annual return* (NAT 71226) by this date.

- Lodge *Annual investment income report* (AIR).
- Lodge Departing Australia superannuation payments (DASP) annual report.
- Lodge *Franking account tax return* when both the:
 - return is a disclosure only (no amount payable)
 - taxpayer is a 30 June balancer.
- Lodge *PAYG withholding annual report no ABN withholding* (NAT 3448).
- Lodge *PAYG withholding from interest, dividend and royalty payments paid to non-residents – annual report* (NAT 7187). This report advises amounts withheld from payments to foreign residents for:
 - interest and unfranked dividend payments that are not reported on an *Annual investment income report* (AIR)
 - royalty payments.
- Lodge *PAYG withholding annual report – payments to foreign residents* (NAT 12413). This report advises amounts withheld from payments to foreign residents for:
 - entertainment and sports activities
 - construction and related activities
 - arranging casino gaming junket activities.
- Lodge lost members report for the period 1 January – 30 June 2020.
- Lodge *TFN report* for closely held trusts for TFNs quoted to a trustee by beneficiaries in quarter 1, 2020–21.

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November 2020

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Due-dates/November-2020/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34600

21 November

- Lodge and pay October 2020 monthly business activity statement.

25 November

- Lodge and pay quarter 1, 2020–21 activity statement if you lodge electronically.

28 November

- Lodge and pay quarter 1, 2020–21 *Superannuation guarantee charge statement - quarterly* if the employer did not pay enough contributions on time.

Employers lodging a *Superannuation guarantee charge statement - quarterly* can choose to offset contributions they paid late to a fund against their super guarantee charge for the quarter. They still have to pay the remaining super guarantee charge.

Note: The super guarantee charge is not tax deductible.

Use our [Super guarantee charge statement and calculator tool](#) to work out the super guarantee charge and prepare the *Superannuation guarantee charge statement – quarterly*.

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December 2020

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Due-dates/December-2020/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34601

1 December

- Pay income tax for taxable large/medium taxpayers, companies and super

funds. Lodgment of return is due 15 January 2021.

- Pay income tax for the taxable head company of a consolidated group with a member deemed to be a large/medium taxpayer in the latest year lodged. Lodgment of return is due 15 January 2021.
- Pay income tax for companies and super funds when lodgment of the tax return was due 31 October 2020.

21 December

- Lodge and pay November 2020 monthly business activity statement.

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January 2021

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Due-dates/January-2021/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34602

15 January

- Lodge tax return for taxable large/medium entities as per the latest year lodged (all entities other than individuals), unless required earlier.
- Payment for large/medium entities with a 15 January due date is:
 - 1 December 2020 – for companies and super funds
 - For trusts – as stated on their notice of assessment.

Note: You cannot request an agent assessed deferral from this date or assume a later date for lodgment on the basis that the taxpayer will be non-taxable in the current year.

- Lodge tax return for the taxable head company of a consolidated group (including a new registrant) that has a member who has been deemed a large/medium entity in the latest year lodged, unless the return was required earlier. Payment was due 1 December 2020.

21 January

- Lodge and pay quarter 2, 2020–21 *PAYG instalment activity statement* for head companies of consolidated groups.
- Lodge and pay December 2020 monthly business activity statement except for business clients with up to \$10 million turnover who report GST monthly and lodge electronically.

28 January

- Make quarter 2, 2020–21 super guarantee contributions to funds by this date.

Employers who do not pay minimum super contributions for quarter 2 by this date must pay the super guarantee charge and lodge a *Superannuation guarantee charge statement – quarterly* (NAT 9599) by 28 February 2021.

Note: The super guarantee charge is not tax deductible.

31 January

- Lodge *TFN report* for closely held trusts if any beneficiary quoted their TFN to a trustee in quarter 2, 2020–21.

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February 2021

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Due-dates/February-2021/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34603

21 February

- Lodge and pay December 2020 monthly business activity statement for business clients with up to \$10 million turnover who report GST monthly and lodge electronically.
- Lodge and pay January 2021 monthly business activity statement.

28 February

- Lodge tax return for non-taxable large/medium entities as per the latest year lodged (except individuals).

Payment (if required) for companies and super funds is also due on this date. Payment for trusts in this category is due as per their notice of assessment.

- Lodge tax returns for new registrant (taxable and non-taxable) large/medium entities (except individuals).

Payment (if required) for companies and super funds is also due on this date. Payment for trusts in this category is due as per their notice of assessment.

- Lodge tax return for non-taxable head company of a consolidated group, including a new registrant, that has a member who has been deemed a

large/medium entity in the latest year lodged.

Lodge tax return for any member of a consolidated group who exits the consolidated group for any period during the year of income.

- Lodge tax return for large/medium new registrant (non-taxable) head company of a consolidated group.
- Lodge and pay *Self-managed superannuation fund annual return* (NAT 71226) for new registrant (taxable and non-taxable) SMSF, unless they have been advised of a 31 October 2020 due date at finalisation of a review of the SMSF at registration.

Note: There are special arrangements for newly registered SMSFs that do not have to lodge a return – see [Super lodgment](#).

- Lodge and pay quarter 2, 2020–21 activity statement for all lodgment methods.
- Pay quarter 2, 2020–21 instalment notice (form R, S or T). Lodge the notice only if you vary the instalment amount.
- Annual GST return – lodge (and pay if applicable) if the taxpayer does not have a tax return lodgment obligation.

If the taxpayer does have a tax return obligation, this return must be lodged by the due date of the tax return.

- Lodge and pay quarter 2, 2020–21 *Superannuation guarantee charge statement - quarterly* if the employer did not pay enough contributions on time.

Employers lodging a *Superannuation guarantee charge statement - quarterly* can choose to offset contributions they paid late to a fund against their super guarantee charge for the quarter. They still have to pay the remaining super guarantee charge.

Note: The super guarantee charge is not tax deductible.

Use our [Super guarantee charge statement and calculator tool](#) to work out the super guarantee charge and prepare the *Superannuation guarantee charge statement – quarterly*.

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March 2021

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Due-dates/March-2021/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34604

21 March

- Lodge and pay February 2021 monthly business activity statement.

31 March

- Lodge tax return for companies and super funds with total income of more than \$2 million in the latest year lodged (excluding large/medium taxpayers), unless the return was due earlier.

Payment for companies and super funds in this category is also due by this date.

- Lodge tax return for the head company of a consolidated group (excluding large/medium), with a member who had a total income in excess of \$2 million in their latest year lodged, unless the return was due earlier.

Payment for companies in this category is also due by this date.

- Lodge tax return for individuals and trusts whose latest return resulted in a tax liability of \$20,000 or more, excluding large/medium trusts.

Payment for individuals and trusts in this category is due as advised on their notice of assessment.

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April 2021

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Due-dates/April-2021/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34605

21 April

- Lodge and pay quarter 3, 2020–21 *PAYG instalment activity statement* for head companies of consolidated groups.
- Lodge and pay March 2021 monthly business activity statement.

28 April

- Lodge and pay quarter 3, 2020–21 activity statement if electing to receive and lodge by paper and not an active STP reporter.
- Pay quarter 3, 2020–21 instalment notice (form R, S or T). Lodge the notice only if you are varying the instalment amount.
- Make super guarantee contributions for quarter 3, 2020–21 to the funds by this

date.

Employers who do not pay minimum super contributions for quarter 3 by this date must pay the super guarantee charge and lodge a *Superannuation guarantee charge statement – quarterly* (NAT 9599) by 28 May 2021.

Note: The super guarantee charge is not tax deductible.

30 April

- Lodge *TFN report* for closely held trusts if any beneficiary quoted their TFN to a trustee in quarter 3, 2020–21.
- Lodge lost members report for the period 1 July 2020 to 31 December 2020.

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May 2021

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Due-dates/May-2021/>
- Last modified: 19 Mar 2021
- QC 34606

15 May

- Lodge 2020 tax returns for all entities that did not have to lodge earlier (including all remaining consolidated groups), and are not eligible for the 5 June concession.

Due date for companies and super funds to pay if required.

Note: Individuals and trusts in this category pay as advised on their notice of assessment.

21 May

- Lodge and pay April 2021 monthly business activity statement.
- Final date to add new FBT clients to your client list to ensure they receive the lodgment and payment concessions for their fringe benefits tax returns.

Lodge and pay *Fringe benefits tax annual return* if lodging by paper.

26 May

- Lodge and pay eligible quarter 3, 2020–21 activity statements if you or your

client have elected to receive and lodge electronically.

28 May

- Lodge and pay quarter 3, 2020–21 *Superannuation guarantee charge statement - quarterly* (NAT 9599) if the employer did not pay enough contributions on time.

Employers who lodge a *Superannuation guarantee charge statement - quarterly* can choose to offset contributions they paid late to a fund against their super guarantee charge for the quarter. They still have to pay the remaining super guarantee charge.

Note: The super guarantee charge is not tax deductible.

Use our [Super guarantee charge statement and calculator tool](#) to work out the super guarantee charge and prepare the *Superannuation guarantee charge statement – quarterly*.

See also:

- [Due dates](#)

June 2021

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Due-dates/June-2021/>
- Last modified: 19 Mar 2021
- QC 34607

5 June

- Lodge tax return for all entities with a lodgment due date of 15 May 2021 if the tax return is not required earlier and both of the following criteria are met:
 - non-taxable or a credit assessment in latest year lodged
 - non-taxable or receiving a credit assessment in the current year.

Note: This includes companies and super funds but excludes large/medium taxpayers and head companies of consolidated groups.

- Lodge tax returns due for individuals and trusts with a lodgment due date of 15 May 2021 provided they also pay any liability due by this date.

Note: This is not a lodgment due date but a concessional arrangement where failure to lodge on time (FTL) penalties will not apply if you lodge and pay by

this date.

21 June

- Lodge and pay May 2021 monthly business activity statement.

25 June

- Lodge and pay 2021 *Fringe benefits tax annual return* for tax agents if lodging electronically.

30 June

- Super guarantee contributions must be paid by this date to qualify for a tax deduction in the 2020–21 financial year.

Note: If any of your clients receive Child Care Subsidy and Family Tax Benefit payments from Services Australia, the client and their partners must lodge their 2019–20 tax return by 30 June 2021, regardless of any deferrals in place. See [Services Australia](#)^{ca} for more information.

See also:

- [Due dates](#)

Tax Time 2020

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/>
- Last modified: 28 May 2020
- QC 45403

Find out about the key changes this tax time, our service commitment, what you can do to prepare, and things to consider before lodging to ensure your clients' tax returns are correct and to help prevent delays in processing.

We start full processing of 2019–20 tax returns on 5 July 2020 and expect to start paying refunds from 16 July 2020.

We aim to finalise the majority of electronically-lodged current year tax returns within 12 business days of receipt.

You can access tax time publications as they are released by visiting [Forms and instructions](#) and selecting Tax Time 2020.

You can also use our [Tax Time Toolkit](#), a suite of resources to help you prepare and lodge tax returns correctly.

Find out about:

- [Overview of key changes](#)
- [Prepare for tax time](#)
- [Before you lodge](#)
- [After you lodge](#)
- [TPSG – tax time key messages](#)

Overview of key changes

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/Overview-of-key-changes/>
- Last modified: 07 Apr 2021
- QC 45404

Key changes and new measures to be aware of when completing your clients' tax returns include:

- [COVID-19 measures and support – individuals](#)
- [COVID-19 measures and support – business and employers](#)
- [Net medical expenses for disability aids, attendant care or aged care](#)
- [No deductions for vacant land](#)
- [Stapled structures](#)
- [International taxation – hybrid mismatch rules](#)
- [Expanding tax incentives for investments in affordable housing](#)
- [Death benefit increase deduction](#)
- [Non-arm's length income \(NALI\)](#)
- [CGT small business concessions – Partnerships](#)
- [SMSF instructions](#)
- [Improved reporting for trusts](#)
- [Limiting access to tax concessions for testamentary trusts](#)
- [Single Touch Payroll – changes to end-of-financial-year processes](#)
- [Granular data changes](#)

COVID-19 measures and support – individuals

Specific measures and support are available for individuals impacted by COVID-19, including:

- early access to superannuation which is not assessable income
- the introduction of an optional simplified method (from 1 March 2020 to 30 June 2020) to claim 80 cents for each hour you work from home to cover all deductible running expenses
- specific advice on the tax treatment of employment payments made because of COVID-19 (for example, if you take leave, are stood down or lose your job)

- specific advice on the tax treatment of residential rental property income and expenses.

See also:

- [COVID-19 – support for individuals and employees](#)

COVID-19 measures and support – business and employers

New rules follow the government's economic response to novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

If you as an employer received a cash flow boost under the boosting cash flow for employers measure, the amount is tax free (non-assessable non-exempt income) and you are entitled to a deduction for the PAYG withholding paid.

From 12 March 2020 until 31 December 2020:

- the instant asset write-off threshold is \$150,000 (up from \$30,000)
- the eligibility range covers businesses with an aggregated turnover of less than \$500 million (up from \$50 million).

Businesses with an aggregated turnover of less than \$500 million are able to accelerate their depreciation deductions on the purchase of certain new depreciable assets. This applies to eligible assets held and first used or installed ready for use from 12 March 2020 until 30 June 2021.

Businesses may have been eligible to receive the JobKeeper Payment for:

- eligible employees
- an individual who is an eligible business participant.

Any amount you received is assessable income of the business.

See also:

- [COVID-19 – information about ATO measures and tailored support](#)
- [COVID-19 – frequently asked questions](#)
- [COVID-19 – Support for businesses and employers](#)

Net medical expenses for disability aids, attendant care or aged care

From 1 July 2019, the tax offset for net medical expenses for disability aids, attendant care or aged care is no longer available.

No deductions for vacant land

You can no longer claim tax deductions for the cost of holding vacant land, such as:

- interest incurred on loans to acquire the land

- land taxes
- council rates
- maintenance costs.

These changes apply to costs incurred from 1 July 2019, even if you held the land before that date.

However, deductions for vacant land can still be claimed where, for example:

- the land is used by you in a business carried on for the purpose of gaining or producing assessable income
- the land is used or available for use in carrying on a business (for example, primary production)
- the land is vacant due to an exceptional circumstance (such as fire, flood, or substantial building defects) that occurred within the last three years.

See also:

- [Deductions for vacant land](#)

Stapled structures

Since 1 July 2019, the following changes apply to stapled structures.

A 30% withholding tax rate (see [LCR 2019/D2 Non-concessional MIT income](#)) applies to:

- trading income that is converted to passive income via a stapled structure or distributed by a trading trust
- income from agricultural land and residential housing (other than affordable housing).

The existing tax exemptions for foreign pension funds and sovereign wealth funds apply only to passive income and portfolio investments. (see [LCR 2019/D4 The superannuation fund for foreign residents withholding tax exemption and sovereign immunity](#)).

Managed investment trust (MIT) withholding tax applies to fund payments made by a withholding MIT to foreign residents. For recipients in an exchange of information country, the MIT withholding tax rate is 30% where the fund payment is attributable to non-concessional MIT income (NCMI).

Income is NCMI if it is any of the following:

- MIT cross staple arrangement income
- MIT trading trust income
- MIT residential housing income
- MIT agricultural income.

Transitional rules may apply to fund payments that are attributable to existing and sufficiently committed investments. If the transitional rules apply, the concessional MIT 15% withholding tax rate continues to apply for the relevant transitional periods. New, approved, economic infrastructure projects may also be concessionally taxed.

Amounts paid to sovereign entities are excluded from NCMI due only to:

- an approved economic infrastructure facility (refer to subsection 12-437(5) of Schedule 1 to the TAA 1953)
- transitional – MIT cross staple arrangement income (refer to section 12-440 of Schedule 1 to the TAA 1953)
- transitional – MIT trading trust income (refer to section 12-447 of Schedule 1 to the TAA 1953)
- transitional – MIT residential housing income (refer to section 12-451 of Schedule 1 to the TAA 1953)
- transitional – MIT agricultural income (refer to section 12-449 of Schedule 1 to the TAA 1953)
- application of significant global entity penalties to subsidiary entities.

The government will be legislating to correct an anomaly in the law by ensuring the increased penalties applicable to significant global entities (SGE) apply to all members within an income tax consolidated group.

Currently, the existing SGE penalty trigger rules only capture those entities who lodge an income tax return and have an assessment of income tax.

The proposed law change will ensure that a subsidiary member of a consolidated group or a MEC group will also be subject to the SGE penalty trigger rules.

For more information, see [Stapled structures](#).

International taxation – hybrid mismatch rules

The hybrid mismatch rules are designed to prevent entities from gaining an unfair competitive advantage through hybrid mismatch arrangements. These arrangements exploit differences in the tax treatment of an entity or instrument under the laws of two or more tax jurisdictions.

These rules have been legislated in the following Australian income tax law to include:

- Division 832 of the ITAA 1997 with an effective start date of 1 January 2019, with the exception of certain aspects of the imported mismatch rules.
- related amendments to the ITAA 1997 (including to subdivision 768-A dividend exemption and Division 207 franking entitlements)
- ITAA 1936 (Part IIIB for the Australian branch of a foreign bank and section 23AH for branch mismatches)
- Division 820 containing an integrity provision that applies to certain deductible interest payments, or payments under a derivative, made to an interposed foreign entity where the rate of foreign income tax on the payment is 10% or less.

The related measures referred to above have effect for distributions received and flows occurring on or after 1 January 2019, apart from particular transitional measures relating to AT1 distributions.

These rules operate in Australia to neutralise hybrid mismatches by cancelling deductions or including amounts in assessable income.

For more information, see [Hybrid mismatch rules](#).

Capital gains tax changes for foreign investors

On 12 December 2019, the government passed amendments to the law for the capital gains tax (CGT) main residence exemption for foreign residents. The changes impact certain foreign residents for property held before 7.30pm (by legal time in the ACT) on 9 May 2017. The CGT main residence exemption can be claimed only for disposals that occur on or before 30 June 2020, provided other existing exemption requirements are satisfied.

For disposal of property that occurs from 1 July 2020, foreign residents will no longer be entitled to the exemption. That is unless any of the following events occur within six years of the individual becoming a foreign resident:

- The foreign resident, their spouse, or their child who was under 18 years old, has a terminal medical condition
- The foreign resident's spouse, or their child who was under 18 years old at the time of their death, dies
- The CGT event involves the distribution of assets between the foreign resident and their spouse because of their divorce, separation or similar maintenance agreements.

For properties acquired at or after 7.30pm (by legal time in the ACT) 9 May 2017, the CGT main residence exemption no longer applies to disposals. That is unless any of the events listed above occur within six years of the individual becoming a foreign resident.

For more information, see [Capital gains tax changes for foreign investors](#).

Expanding tax incentives for investments in affordable housing

On 9 May 2017, the government announced that it will provide an additional CGT discount of up to 10% for Australian resident individuals who provide affordable rental housing to people earning a low to moderate income. This will increase the CGT discount to up to 60% for qualifying investors.

On 12 December 2019 the change became law and will apply to CGT events occurring on or after 1 January 2021. These residential rental properties must have been provided on or after 1 January 2018 for a period or periods totalling to a minimum of three years (1,095 days), which may be aggregate usage over different periods. The number of days affordable housing was provided before 1 January 2018 will not be counted.

For more information, see [Expanding tax incentives for investments in affordable housing](#).

Death benefit increase deduction

From 1 July 2019, the *Treasury Laws Amendment (Fair and Sustainable Superannuation) Act 2016* removed the death benefit increase deduction. Previously, an income tax deduction was available to a complying super fund, life insurer, or complying approved deposit fund that pays an increased superannuation lump sum, because of the death of a member for the benefit of their spouse, former spouse or child, to compensate for income tax paid by the fund in respect of contributions made for the member during their lifetime.

Non-arm's length income (NALI)

On 2 October 2019, the *Treasury Laws Amendment (2018 Superannuation Measures No. 1) Bill 2019* that amends section 295-550 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997* (dealing with NALI), was given royal assent.

From 1 July 2018, NALI was expanded to also include income derived by an SMSF from a scheme in which the parties were not dealing with each at arm's length. This is where the fund incurred expenses (including nil expenses) in deriving the income that are less than, those which the SMSF would otherwise have been expected to incur if the parties were dealing on an arm's-length basis.

The expenses may be of a revenue or capital nature in the same way that NALI may be statutory or ordinary income.

From 1 July 2018, income derived by an SMSF in the capacity of beneficiary of a trust through holding a fixed entitlement to the income of the trust will be NALI where both:

- the SMSF acquired the entitlement under a scheme or the income was derived under a scheme in which parties weren't dealing with each other at arm's length
- the SMSF incurred expenses in acquiring the entitlement or deriving the income that are less than, including nil expenses, what the SMSF would otherwise have been expected to incur if the parties were dealing on an arm's length basis.

For more information, see [Non-arm's length income](#).

CGT small business concessions – Partnerships

Partners in partnerships who alienate their income by creating, assigning or otherwise dealing in rights to the future income of a partnership will no longer be able to access the small business CGT concessions in relation to these rights.

These changes apply to CGT events occurring after 7.30pm (by legal time in the ACT) on 8 May 2018.

SMSF instructions

Part A qualification

Instructions for Section A: SMSF auditor Part A have been updated to help clarify the requirements for the fund. This question can also now be answered as 'No' if the audit report was qualified only in relation to insufficient audit evidence under Auditing Standard ASA 510 Initial Audit Engagements – Opening Balance.

Was Part B of the audit report qualified

Question 6D no longer includes Part A qualifications. This question relates only to rectifying to Part B of the audit report.

Property count

A new label J7 Property count has been added to Section H: Assets and liabilities at 15b. If your SMSF holds investments in real property that was held in trust as a security under a limited recourse borrowing arrangement, this information must be reported at J7 Property count.

G1 Death benefit increase

- Label G1 Death benefit increase at Section C, Deductions and non-deductible expenses has been removed.
- If a fund member died on or before 30 June 2017, the fund must have paid the benefit before 1 July 2019 to be eligible to claim a deduction.
- From 1 July 2019, the deduction is no longer available.

Extending anti-avoidance rules for circular trust distributions to family trusts

From 1 July 2019, trustees of [family trusts](#) are liable to pay [trustee beneficiary non-disclosure tax](#) (TBNT) on circular trust distributions. Family trusts are trusts that have a valid family trust election in place, have made a valid interposed election, or are part of a family group.

When trustees of those trusts become presently entitled to a circular trust distribution, TBNT is imposed on the untaxed part of that distribution at the top marginal tax rate, plus the rate of Medicare levy.

For more information, see [Closely held trusts](#).

Improved reporting for trusts

To allow trustees of trusts to more accurately report information to us, we have added:

- a new testamentary trusts code at Type of trust
- a new label C1 Division 6AA Eligible income at item 56 Statement of distribution
- net medical expenses for disability aids, attendant care or aged care.

From 1 July 2019, the tax offset for net medical expenses is no longer available for:

- disability aids
- attendant care

- aged care.

Limiting access to tax concessions for testamentary trusts

On 22 June 2020, legislation was enacted to improve the integrity of the taxation of a testamentary trust by preventing minors from accessing concessional tax rates (that is, the ordinary tax rates) on income derived by a testamentary trust from assets unrelated to the deceased estate.

These changes apply to assets acquired by, or transferred to, the trustee of a trust estate on or after 1 July 2019.

For more information, see [Appendix 9: Instructions to trustees where a beneficiary is under 18 years of age — other than trustees of deceased estates](#).

Single Touch Payroll – changes to end-of-financial-year processes

Most employers should now report their employees' payroll information through Single Touch Payroll (STP). If you or your clients aren't reporting through STP, you should start straight away.

Next step:

- Read more about how to [start reporting](#) in STP.

Changes to payment summaries

Employers no longer need to give their employees payment summaries nor lodge a payment summary annual report to us for information reported and finalised through Single Touch Payroll (STP).

Employees who don't receive a payment summary can find the information needed to finalise their tax return in their new income statement in ATO online service through myGov or by contacting their tax agent. Tax professionals can access their clients' income statements through Online services for agents.

Employers should tell their employees not to expect a payment summary and to contact their agent or visit ATO online services via myGov to complete their tax returns.

Finalising STP records

After the last pay event for the financial year, employers need to make a finalisation declaration. They must do this by:

- 14 July if they have 20 or more employees
- 31 July if they have 19 or fewer employees.

If your employer client can't make a finalisation declaration by the due date, they will need to apply for a [deferral](#).

Next step:

- Read more about [end-of-year finalisation through STP](#).

STP exemption extension for closely held payees

We have extended the exemption for small employers with 19 or fewer employees to report their closely held (related) payees through STP from 1 July 2020 to 1 July 2021.

Closely held payees include family members, directors or shareholders of a company, or beneficiaries of a trust.

Other (arm's length) employees must be reported through STP on or before each payday. Employers can choose to report their closely held payees sooner if they are ready.

Next step:

- Read more about [small employers – closely held \(related\) payees](#).

ATO communication with agents, employers and individuals

This tax time we're writing to you and your clients about the changes to end-of-financial-year (EOFY) processes associated with STP.

We're also sending you a list of your clients' STP reporting status so you can help them with STP onboarding and EOFY finalisation.

Granular data changes

From 1 July 2020, the granular data expansion will be complete and include the:

- income details schedule
- multi-property rental schedule for individuals.

Information entered on these schedules and the deductions schedule will be included with lodgment of 2019–20 individual tax returns.

For more information, see [Granular data – level of detail required](#).

Prepare for tax time

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/Prepare-for-tax-time/>
- Last modified: 28 May 2020
- QC 45681

To prepare for tax time, we recommend you:

- update your client list
- check your clients' lodgment program due dates
- advise us if your client does not need to lodge
- review security to help stop fraud.

The lodgment due dates for your clients will be available in Online services for agents by the end of July 2020.

We will start full processing of 2019–20 tax returns on 5 July 2020 and expect to start paying refunds from 16 July 2020.

Find out more about preparing for tax time:

- [Our service commitment](#)
- [Update your client list](#)
- [Check your clients' lodgment program due dates](#)
- [Advise us when a return is not required](#)
- [Review security to stop fraud and protect your clients](#)

When setting up appointments with your clients, remind them to provide the information you need to prepare and lodge their tax returns, including:

- personal identification
- Australian financial institution account details
- Medicare card or number
- private health insurance information
- spouse details, including details of income.

Our service commitment

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/Prepare-for-tax-time/Our-service-commitment/>
- Last modified: 28 May 2020
- QC 45684

Find out about our service commitment to you during tax time.

On this page:

- [Tax Practitioner Stewardship Group](#)
- [Tax returns](#)
- [Amendments](#)

Tax Practitioner Stewardship Group

During tax time, we hold meetings with the Tax Practitioner Stewardship Group to discuss any emerging issues, share our progress, and take on board your ideas.

See also:

- [Tax Practitioner Stewardship Group](#)
- [Tax professionals newsroom](#) – keep up to date with the latest information this tax time

Tax returns

We will aim to finalise the majority of electronically-lodged current year tax returns within 12 business days of receipt. This includes both individual and non-individual tax returns.

Tax returns lodged on paper could take up to 50 business days from receipt to be finalised. You should lodge electronically to benefit your client, as this will result in the quickest turnaround time.

If a tax return is incomplete, incorrect, needs checking or relates to a prior year, it may take us longer to finalise. In some cases, we will need to contact you for additional information.

We will continue to send you a weekly *Tax return status* report. This will help you keep your clients' up to date to provide the best client experience, and may reduce unnecessary calls to you or us.

Amendments

We will aim to finalise the majority of electronically-lodged amendments within 20 business days of receipt. Amendments lodged on paper could take up to 50 business days from receipt to finalisation.

See also:

- [Prevent delays in processing returns](#)
- [After you lodge](#)

Update your client list

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/Prepare-for-tax-time/Update-your-client-list/>
- Last modified: 28 May 2020
- QC 45687

It is important to undertake regular reviews of your client list to add any new clients

and remove those you no longer represent.

Lodging a final return or completing a non-lodgment advice does not remove the client from your list.

You can add or remove clients, or update existing clients' details, using Online services for agents or the practitioner lodgment service.

See also:

- [Client list](#)
- [Add client](#) and [Remove client](#) – Online services for agents
- [Client update](#) – Practitioner lodgment service

Your authority to act on behalf of a new client for lodgment purposes only takes effect from the day we receive notice. To ensure new clients are covered by your lodgment program for 2020–21, you must notify us of your authority to act by 31 October 2020.

Once you have notified us, you can view copies of their past income tax notices of assessment from 2004–05 onwards and copies of their tax returns from 2010 onwards in Online services for agents.

See also:

- [Income tax](#) – Online services for agents

If you accept a new client for income tax purposes after 31 October 2020, you should check the lodgment due date for the client on your client list. If they were previously a self-preparer, they will not be covered by your lodgment program and may need to lodge by an earlier due date.

If your client has one or more prior year tax returns overdue, their due date is 31 October 2020.

See also:

- [Managing your lodgment program](#)

Check your clients' lodgment program due dates

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/Prepare-for-tax-time/Check-your-clients--lodgment-program-due-dates/>
- Last modified: 28 May 2020
- QC 45688

The lodgment due dates for all of your clients will be available in Online services for agents by the end of July.

In Online services for agents you can view income tax due dates:

- at the client summary For action or [Income tax history](#)
- in the Income tax lodgment status [On-demand reports](#).

If your clients have one or more prior year tax returns overdue as at 30 June, their current year tax return due date is 31 October.

If all overdue prior year returns are lodged by 31 October, the current year tax return will be due as per your lodgment program. The updated due date can take up to three weeks after 31 October to update.

If you have clients who have been prosecuted for non-lodgment of prior year returns, then the current year tax return due date may have changed.

Lodgment and payment due dates may change where your client circumstances change – for example, by the processing of a prior year amendment.

If your client's due date for lodgment does not display, or you are unsure of your client's lodgment due date, phone us on 13 72 86 Fast Key Code 1 3 2 for clarification.

See also:

- [Due dates](#)
- [Update your client list](#)

Advise us when a return is not required

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/Prepare-for-tax-time/Advise-us-when-a-return-is-not-required/>
- Last modified: 28 May 2020
- QC 45692

If your client is not required to lodge a tax return for a particular year or ever, advise us so you can avoid:

- compliance action that may take place once the return becomes overdue
- preparation, lodgment and processing of a nil return.

The best way to advise us that a return is not required or that further returns are not required is to use Online services for agents or the practitioner lodgment service.

If no further returns are required, you also need to [remove the client](#) from your client

list.

See also:

- [Non-lodgment advice](#) – Online services for agents
- [Notifying us if lodgment is not required](#)
- [Notifying us when further returns are not necessary](#)
- [Low income earners may need to lodge](#)

Review security to stop fraud and protect your clients

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/Prepare-for-tax-time/Review-security-to-stop-fraud-and-protect-your-clients/>
- Last modified: 24 Jul 2020
- QC 45695

You hold a large amount of client, staff and business information that is of interest to identity thieves. Criminals may target your practice to access your clients' information to obtain fraudulent refunds. They may also try to trick you into clicking on links or opening attachments that install malware or ransomware on your computer systems.

While Australia is affected by COVID-19 (coronavirus) it is important you and your clients know the tell-tale signs of tax and economic stimulus related scams.

Watch out for some common warning signs. We will never:

- send an email or SMS with a hyperlink directing you to our online services such as myGov
- request personal identifying information via a return email unless you have agreed to engage with us in this way
- send you or your clients unsolicited pre-recorded messages to your phones using a fake or 'spoofed' phone number
- threaten you or your clients with immediate arrest and insist you stay on the line until a payment is made
- prevent your clients from discussing their tax affairs with you
- make a conference call between us, your client, and you
- request payment of a debt via iTunes, Google Play cards or other vouchers, cryptocurrency, cardless cash transfer, offshore wire transfer or into a bank account not held by the Reserve Bank of Australia
- ask you or your clients to pay a fee to receive a refund.

Stay up to date on our [current SMS and email activities](#), including alerts relating to

COVID-19 stimulus packages. To check if a suspicious call, message or request is from us, you or your clients can phone the ATO scam hotline on 1800 008 540.

Security procedures

Review your security procedures to help stop fraud and protect your clients and your practice.

We recommend you:

- never access online government services via a hyperlink in an email or SMS - only via an independent search
- call us on an independently sourced number to verify an interaction if in doubt
- check the proof of identity for all new clients and question discrepancies before you prepare and lodge their returns
- ensure your computer systems and other devices have up to date security and anti-virus software to protect against cyber attacks
- review staff accesses, remove access for anyone who shouldn't have it and update passwords regularly
- talk to your clients and staff about the importance of
 - keeping personal information secure – including user IDs, passwords and tax file numbers
 - exercising caution when clicking on downloads, hyperlinks or opening attachments in unsolicited or unfamiliar emails, SMS or on social media.

You or your clients may receive fraudulent communications that claim to be from us, so it's important to know [how to verify or report a scam](#). You may like to consider sharing this information with your clients, or linking to it from your own website.

If you experience a data breach, phone us as soon as possible on 1800 467 033 Monday to Friday, 8.00am–6.00pm, so we can apply measures to protect your business, staff and clients where necessary.

See also:

- [Security advice for tax professionals](#)
- [Top cyber security tips for business](#)
- [Data breach guidance for tax professionals](#)
- [Proof-of-identity checks](#)
- [Australian Cyber Security Centre](#)^{CA}
- [SCAMwatch](#)^{CA}

Before you lodge

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/Before-you-lodge/>
- Last modified: 28 May 2020
- QC 45696

Before lodging your clients' tax returns:

- consider residency and foreign income
- use the pre-filling service
- ensure work-related expense claims are correct
- help prevent delays in processing by checking for common errors.

For example, processing may be delayed if there are incorrect or incomplete details in your clients' returns.

If your client is claiming the [Medicare levy exemption](#), they will need to obtain a Medicare Entitlement Statement from Services Australia before lodging their tax return.

Your client will need to complete the application form each year that they wish to claim the exemption.

If your client does not qualify for an exemption, they will be subject to a [Medicare levy](#) of 2% of their taxable income, regardless of whether or not they have private health insurance.

In addition to the Medicare levy, your client may have to pay the [Medicare levy surcharge](#) if they do not have the appropriate private patient hospital cover for any period during the financial year and they earn above a certain income.

The net medical expenses tax offset is not available to claim in the 2019–20 and later income years. Legislation passed in 2014 abolishes this offset from 1 July 2019.

Follow these links to find out what else to consider before lodging your clients' tax returns.

- [Prevent delays in processing returns](#)
- [Low income earners may need to lodge](#)
- [Residency tests for tax purposes](#)
- [Foreign income](#)
- [Work-related expenses](#)
- [Data matching](#)
- [Sharing economy](#)
- [Business industry code reporting](#)

See also:

- [Pre-filling service](#)

Prevent delays in processing returns

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/Before-you-lodge/Prevent-delays-in-processing-returns/>
- Last modified: 28 May 2020
- QC 45697

We strive to maintain [our service commitment](#). However, longer than standard processing times occur when:

- we need to cross-check data with other government agencies (including Services Australia – Centrelink and Child Support)
- your client has a debt obligation with us
- your client is insolvent
- a tax file number (TFN) has been compromised
- we have queries about information provided in a tax return.

When these situations arise, we usually need to review the details and if necessary, adjust the tax return or contact you.

On this page

- [Avoid common errors](#)
- [Omitting income](#)
- [Client details that don't match our records](#)
- [Providing additional information](#)

Avoid common errors

Common errors include:

- providing incorrect information – for example, private health insurance policy details do not match
- lodging duplicate returns for the same year – if your client has already lodged their tax return and needs to correct a mistake, you must request an amendment
- repeating information – if you have already declared information at a previous question then no need to repeat it as additional information
- including information from a prior year return that is not relevant for the current year return – when you roll over details from a previous year's return in your software, make sure you delete information that is no longer relevant (including additional information).

Omitting income

You should wait for the pre-fill report to become available before lodging clients' tax returns. This will ensure you do not omit any income and help avoid processing delays.

We cross-check information provided by third parties to ensure all income is

declared on a tax return. If we identify a discrepancy, for example, interest income has been omitted, we will adjust the return with the information that has been provided. We may phone you to confirm the discrepancy, which can delay processing.

You may have clients that received additional government payments in the 2019–20 financial year, such as JobSeeker or JobKeeper. These payments will be available in the pre-fill report and need to be included in your client's tax return.

Getting the tax return right the first time will avoid delays, penalties, interest and repayments.

Client details that don't match our records

Before lodging your clients' tax returns:

- confirm details with your client – particularly their name, addresses, TFN and date of birth
- compare their details with those on our systems
- update any incorrect details.

If you transfer details from a previous year's tax return, ensure the details in your software are correct before lodging.

When lodging tax returns for multiple years (even if you are lodging them on or around the same day) ensure your clients' details are correct on all returns.

See also:

- [Name changes for individuals and sole traders](#)

Providing additional information

Including additional information in a tax return stops processing as we need to check the information you provided. This will delay processing and in most cases, take longer than 12 days to review and confirm that information.

Include:

- Requests for advice that directly affect the calculation of tax for that specific tax return, such as:
 - querying if an item in the return is eligible for inclusion as taxable income
 - determining if private binding rulings relate to this return.
- Details we request to be included as additional information, for example, when a client
 - contributed to more than one super fund or retirement savings account
 - is not an Australian resident and intends to claim a credit that the trustee had paid on their share of income from a resident trust.
- Software problems

- include details of information you cannot enter at a particular field or label, including the value and field or label names.
- Foreign income, always include
 - net foreign income from a tax treaty country
 - foreign income tax offset to be calculated by us.

Leave out:

- additional information if it is not relevant to the outcome of the income tax assessment
- additional information you have carried over from the previous year, unless it is current for the tax return being lodged
- information such as personal details (for example, family breakups), or work-related expenses
- written notes, such as 'final', 'nil return', 'please issue a notice of assessment', 'minutes', 'statement of distribution', 'other', or any numeric symbols
- information that is already included elsewhere in the tax return.

Tips for specific subjects

- [Primary production](#)
- [Lump sum payment in arrears](#)
- [Non-residents](#)
- [Private health](#)
- [Rental information](#)

Primary production

Include electing to withdraw from primary production averaging provisions:

- An election must be made in the year of the tax return when your client first wants to withdraw. Include the date of withdrawal and quote section 392–25 to apply.
- Special or taxable professional income (or both) for primary producers when averaging details have not been applied in the previous year or years.

Leave out averaging provisions that have been applied correctly in previous years.

Lump sum payment in arrears

Include the amount of the lump sum and the breakdown of the amount of payment in arrears for each income year involved. This is required to correctly calculate a tax offset, if eligible. This applies to lump sum payment in arrears (LSPIA) on tax returns either at:

- Q7 labels Y or Z
- Q24 label Y.

Leave out:

- If the LSPIA amount is under 10% of the taxable income, less the amount of the LSPIA, employment termination payment death component, other lump sum income and capital gains.

Non-residents

Part-year resident and non-resident clients with interest and dividend income should complete as follows.

Include:

- details of amounts for interest and unfranking dividend income
- the country of residency, where unfranking dividends are to be returned; this will ensure the correct rate for the dividend income is applied.

Leave out:

- dates of entry and exit for the 'Australia client resident under 183 days' test.

Full year non-residents should complete as follows.

Include:

- interest and unfranked dividend income for the individual tax return at:
 - gross interest item 10 label L
 - unfranked dividends item 11 label S.

If the unfranked dividend income is not under an international agreement, then a rate of 30% is applied automatically by our system.

If the rate is 15%, then include either your client's:

- overseas postal or residential address
- country of residence.

Private health

Leave out:

- Where an Australian private health insurance fund name is not included on the drop-down list, select Other – ATO use only. It's not necessary to include details in additional information.
- As overseas funds are not eligible for the tax offset, do not include these details or any reference to them or make a private health insurance rebate claim.

Rental information

Leave out:

- information the rental property did not derive an income
- information the rental property is now the owner's own home

- the date the rental property was sold
- general information regarding rental income, expenses or property.

Rental information can be included if there is specific information not shown in the tax return or the *Rental property schedule* that affects the calculation of that specific return.

Low income earners may need to lodge

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/Before-you-lodge/Low-income-earners-may-need-to-lodge/>
- Last modified: 28 May 2020
- QC 45698

If your client's taxable income is under the tax-free threshold, they may still need to lodge a tax return. Common reasons for this include if they either:

- had pay as you go (PAYG) withheld from payments received during the year
- had a reportable fringe benefits amount on their income statement or PAYG payment summary
- had reportable employer superannuation contributions on their income statement or PAYG payment summary
- made a loss or can claim a loss made in a previous year
- were an Australian resident for tax purposes and had exempt foreign employment income and \$1 or more of other income
- were entitled to the private health insurance rebate but did not claim their correct entitlement as a premium reduction
- were a liable or recipient parent under a child support assessment, unless both of the following applied
 - they received one or more Australian Government allowances, pensions or payments (listed on the *Individual tax return instructions 2020* at [question 5](#) or [question 6](#)) for the whole year
 - their income was less than \$25,575.

See also:

- [Do you need to lodge a tax return? 2020](#)

Residency tests for tax purposes

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/Before-you-lodge/Residency-tests-for-tax-purposes/>
- Last modified: 28 May 2020
- QC 45699

The tests we use to work out residency status for your clients for tax purposes are not the same as residency tests used by other Australian agencies for other purposes, such as immigration.

Advise your clients that if they reside in Australia for less than 183 days in a financial year, they may still be a resident for tax purposes.

To help you and your clients understand their residency for tax purposes, use our online tool [Are you a resident?](#) to determine your client's situation.

Remember:

- The 183 day test only applies to individuals arriving in Australia.
- There are separate rules for working holiday makers and individuals who are dual residents.

See also:

- [Work out your tax residency](#)
- [Residency examples](#)
- [Tax treaties](#) for dual residents
- [Working holiday makers](#)

Foreign income

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/Before-you-lodge/Foreign-income/>
- Last modified: 28 May 2020
- QC 45701

Generally, your clients must declare all income they receive from foreign sources during the financial year in their tax returns. Foreign income includes:

- business income
- foreign employment income
- most pensions and annuities (including from managed funds)
- income streams from super funds
- bank interest
- dividends
- royalties
- rent

- capital gains
- personal services income.

Help your clients get their tax returns right by advising them:

- In some instances, they must include foreign income amounts that are attributed to them under Australian tax laws, even when the amounts are not actually received by them.
- Certain foreign employment income is exempt from tax in Australia, but they may still need to include it in their tax returns.
- If they paid foreign tax in another country on income they received, they may be entitled to an Australian foreign income tax offset that stops them paying tax twice.

The data we exchange with other countries has increased. This includes data we get through international agreements and the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC).

See also:

- [International tax for individuals](#)
- [Common Reporting Standard \(CRS\)](#)

Work-related expenses

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/Before-you-lodge/Work-related-expenses/>
- Last modified: 17 Dec 2020
- QC 45702

In these extraordinary times, the Australian community has been significantly impacted by natural disasters and COVID-19. We are focused on supporting taxpayers to get their claims right and ease the burden at tax time.

This year, you'll find 10 new occupation posters for paramedics, fire fighters, pilots, bus drivers, agriculture workers, call centre operators, lawyers, engineers, performing artists and factory workers, increasing our suite of occupation posters.

See our suite of occupation and label posters, guides and toolkits at our [Tax Time toolkit](#).

On this page:

- [Working from home](#)
- [Adjusting representative periods](#)
- [Reconstructing records](#)

Working from home

We have temporarily altered the method for claiming home office expenses for people who worked from home from 1 March 2020 to 30 June 2021.

This easy way to claim a deduction for additional home office running expenses means people can claim a flat rate of 80 cents per hour worked at home.

This flat rate is a cover-all approach that includes both:

- the additional running expenses incorporated under the 52 cents fixed rate per hour
- computer consumables, stationery, phone and internet expenses and the decline in value of a computer, laptop, phone or similar device.

We previously required people to have a dedicated 'work from home' area, which is not required to claim the shortcut method. We have also allowed multiple people living in the same house and working from home to each claim the 80 cents per work hour flat rate.

Your clients must keep a record of the number of hours worked from home. This could be in the form of timesheets, rosters, a diary or similar document that sets out the hours worked.

You still have the option to use one of the existing methods to calculate home office expenses

Remind your clients they can't claim:

- any deductions for home schooling their children – this includes personal expenses like children's technology for online learning or purchasing things like sporting equipment
- minimal tasks, such as occasionally checking emails or taking calls from home
- the cost of coffee, tea, milk and other general household items their employer may provide them at work
- occupancy expenses, such as mortgage interest, rent and rates.

See also:

- [Working from home during COVID-19](#)
- [Home office expenses](#)

Adjusting representative periods

Based on the changes this year, we expect to see an overall reduction in work-related car, travel and clothing expenses for a number of industries.

This may be an opportune time to review your clients' claims to ensure that they are applicable in the current financial year.

If a client's usual pattern of work changes during the year, they may need to complete a new record. This is particularly important where you calculate your

client's claims using representative periods like:

- car expenses – using the logbook method
- working from home – using the four-week representative period.

In these cases your client will need records of their normal work-related use as well as a separate record for the COVID-19 period if their circumstances have changed.

Reconstructing records

If your client's records have been damaged, destroyed or lost, there are a number of ways they can reconstruct them. Bank or credit card statements alone are not sufficient evidence, but they can be used in conjunction with other documents which outline the nature of the goods or services purchased.

If your client is unable to obtain a receipt from a supplier, they can still claim a deduction if we are satisfied that the nature and quality of the evidence shows that they:

- spent the money
- are entitled to claim a deduction.

If your client lost their home in the recent bushfires or from another disaster and are unable to substantiate claims made in their tax return or activity statement, we will accept reasonable claims without substantiation, but they will still be required to tell us how they calculated the claim. This is usually only allowed where it is not reasonably possible to obtain the original documents.

Your clients can keep track of their deductions using the *myDeductions* tool in the ATO app. They can email you their data so you can include it in their tax return.

See also:

- [Deductions you can claim](#)
- [myDeductions](#)

Data matching

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/Before-you-lodge/Data-matching/>
- Last modified: 28 May 2020
- QC 45703

The ATO receives information from a variety of third-party sources, such as employers and financial institutions. We use this data for a range of activities and one of those is data matching. This ensures taxpayers declare all their income, offsets and exemptions correctly.

Pre-filling data is available from 1 July, with the majority of your clients' data finalised by mid-August.

This year we amended over 350,000 individual tax returns before issuing the tax assessments. We used third-party data that was available through your pre-fill service yet was omitted from their tax returns.

In addition, we corrected approximately 200,000 taxpayers who had apparent discrepancies in their individual tax returns. We were able to validate these using third-party sources after the issue of their tax assessments.

With improved data available from more sources, we are expanding our data matching to include areas such as:

- cryptocurrency transactions
- sharing economy – accommodation providers.

Take extra care when preparing your clients' tax returns at the start of the financial year, and remind them they need to provide all necessary information.

See also:

- [Pre-filling service](#)
- [Prevent delays in processing returns](#)
- [Data matching](#)

Sharing economy

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/Before-you-lodge/Sharing-economy/>
- Last modified: 28 May 2020
- QC 49118

The sharing economy is economic activity through a digital platform (such as a website or an app) where people share assets or services for a fee.

If your clients are engaged in the sharing economy, their income and deductions need to be included in their tax returns.

Sharing economy activities include:

- ride-sourcing (also known as ride-sharing) – transporting passengers for a fare
- renting out all or part of a home for a short-term basis
- sharing assets, such as
 - personal assets like boats, cars or caravans
 - storage or business spaces like car parking spaces or offices

- personal belongings like tools or sports equipment
- providing services, such as
 - delivering goods like food or parcels
 - performing tasks and activities for other people like odd jobs, cleaning or running errands
 - providing professional services like web or trade services.

If your clients provide goods or services through digital platforms, consider how income tax, goods and services tax or any other tax applies to their earnings.

If your clients are providing ride-sourcing services they need to get an Australian business number (ABN) and register for GST, regardless of how much they earn.

See also:

- [The sharing economy and tax](#)

Business industry code reporting

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/Before-you-lodge/Business-industry-code-reporting/>
- Last modified: 28 May 2020
- QC 45704

Many businesses change purpose over time. This tax time, take the opportunity to check that your clients' business industry codes are correct.

Updating a business industry code

Use the [Business industry code tool](#) to check what your client's business industry code should be. If it needs updating:

- enter the new code in their next tax return
- change it on the [Australian Business Register](#)²⁷.

Why update business industry codes?

Having the right code in your clients' tax returns can:

- stop us contacting you and your clients unnecessarily
- prevent delays in processing tax returns
- ensure your clients are not incorrectly identified for compliance activities
- ensure businesses receive the information and advice relevant to their business activity.

Once you have the correct codes, you can use the [small business benchmarks](#) to see how your clients' businesses compare against their competitors.

Operating multiple businesses

For clients operating more than one type of business:

- select the main business activity
- indicate they operate multiple businesses at the relevant label in their tax return.

Do not use information from multiple businesses as this could mean the business is incorrectly classified as outside the benchmarks.

If your client's industry is not represented in our benchmarks, you can use the information in [Taxation statistics](#).

After you lodge

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/After-you-lodge/>
- Last modified: 08 Feb 2021
- QC 45689

We aim to process the majority of electronically lodged tax returns within 12 business days. If you can't lodge electronically, lodging a paper tax return can take up to 50 days for us to process manually. We will keep you informed about the progress of your client's tax return and any delays.

You should provide relevant information to your clients to manage their expectations about when they will receive their notice of assessment.

See also:

- [Our service commitment](#)

On this page:

- [Checking the status of your client's tax return](#)
- [Notice of assessment](#)
- [Other electronic communication to clients](#)

Checking the status of your client's tax return

We let you know about the progress of a tax return several ways; these include:

- [Tax return status email](#)

- [Online services for agents](#)
- [Confirmation of refund SMS](#)

Tax return status email

We'll email you a weekly report where there are processing delays with your clients' tax returns.

Your clients will first appear on the tax return status report 10 days after lodgment. They will remain on this report each week until we finish processing their tax returns. The lodgment date of your client's tax return will only display on the report when the processing is delayed by 28 days or more.

The report will provide details of what may be causing the processing delay.

Online services for agents

You can view the lodgment and progress of your clients' tax returns in Online services for agents. At the Client summary select Lodgment then Income tax and History.

The outcome of a tax return will not be visible online until the tax return has been processed and the assessment amounts are dispersed to your clients' accounts.

Even when the issue date and assessment amount become visible, they are both subject to review and change until the notice of assessment has issued.

As we process your client's tax return, the Status and Outcome in Online services for agents may differ to the details provided in the *Tax return status* report.

Confirmation of refund SMS

Your clients may receive a confirmation of refund SMS message from us. This SMS lets them know their tax return has been finalised and when to expect their refund in their nominated bank account.

See also:

- [Current SMS and email activities – Tax and BAS agent emails](#)

Notice of assessment

You can view a client's notice of assessment in Online services for agents. At the Client summary select Lodgment then Income tax and History.

You can also view the client's notice of assessment via Communication history in Online services for agents.

See also:

- [Your notice of assessment](#)
- [Online services for agents](#) to view, save and print copies of your client's notice

of assessment online.

Other electronic communication to clients

If your client has created a myGov account that is linked to the ATO, they will receive their notice of assessment, tax receipts and most communication from us electronically via their myGov Inbox.

Communications sent to your clients via their myGov Inbox will not be sent to you in paper form.

You can view those communications via Communication history in Online services for agents. You and your client can choose where our digital communications are sent using Communication preferences in Online services for agents.

See also:

- [Communication history](#)
- [Communication preferences](#)

TPSG – tax time key messages

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/TPSG---tax-time-key-messages/>
- Last modified: 11 Sep 2020
- QC 41004

During tax time, we meet regularly with members of the Tax Practitioner Stewardship Group (TPSG) to share mutual progress, emerging issues and ideas.

- [Tax Time update – 1 September 2020](#)
- [Tax Time update – 25 August 2020](#)
- [Tax Time update – 11 August 2020](#)
- [Tax Time update – 4 August 2020](#)
- [Tax Time update – 28 July 2020](#)
- [Tax Time update – 21 July 2020](#)
- [Tax Time update – 14 July 2020](#)
- [Tax Time update – 30 June 2020](#)
- [Tax Time update – 23 June 2020](#)

See also:

- [Tax Time 2020](#) – what's new and what's changed

Tax Time update – 1 September 2020

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/TPSG---tax-time-key-messages/Tax-Time-update---1-September-2020/>
- Last modified: 11 Sep 2020
- QC 63642

ATO systems and maintenance

ATO systems and digital services continue to be stable and are coping well with the increased volumes associated with tax time and the stimulus measures.

Changes have been made to the ATO Legal Database and recent feedback from TPSG members indicates that many of the performance issues reported have been resolved. The solutions implemented will continue to be monitored over the next few weeks to further refine performance and the search functionality, and ultimately establish whether these solutions have been successful.

Communications

Tax professional's newsletter

This week's newsletter will include articles on:

- [Tax professionals' conversations webcast](#) on 17 September 2020 – 'Supporting you and your clients through 2020'.
- Web changes affecting bookmarks and links that professionals should be aware of.

Articles in development

Superannuation

- COVID-19 early release of super update – tips for applying, avoiding common mistakes and the compliance work we have undertaken to confirm eligibility.
- Good record keeping for SMSF's.

Other

- A reminder that some low income earners may need to lodge returns.
- [July 2020 ATO impersonation scam report](#).

Individual communications

- The ATO are revising and updating existing tax time products to improve readability of these products.
- Social media posts are planned on the topics of work-related expenses and Tax Help.

Small business communications

- The ATO are doing some third-party public relations through regional publications. This will include an article to be published in the September edition of the Greater Dandenong 'Talking Business' magazine covering the themes of home-based business and mental health.

Cash flow boost stimulus measure

The ATO has contacted a small number of cash flow boost recipients where out of pattern behaviour has been observed, or unusual amounts are recorded in activity statements in the salary and wages amounts or PAYG withholding. In response, a number of taxpayers have amended activity statements, correcting errors that have occurred. Follow-up work will be undertaken on cases that have not contacted the ATO by the response due date.

The ATO is following up on issues relating to payments to closely held entities and associated parties and their eligibility for cash flow boost. The ATO is also addressing the perceived inconsistencies in the treatment of cases that have been escalated for review.

The ATO responded to a query previously raised in relation to refunds to clients who have paid their activity statement balance without taking into consideration the cash flow boost credit that is due to be applied.

For most cases, these overpayments are picked up by ATO systems and corrected ensuring that the appropriate refund amount issues. There are a small number of instances where this doesn't occur due to suppressions on the accounts, compliance activities or other reasons. If the refund does not issue as expected, clients are encouraged to contact the ATO to request a manual refund. Alternatively, these refunds will be issued once the next activity statement is lodged.

JobKeeper payment

On Monday 31 August 2020 the ATO implemented a system release for JobKeeper 1.1. All reports so far indicate that this release is functioning as intended.

This release allows employers who are managing their employees through ATO Online services to add additional employees. The ATO has also updated the baseline based on Single Touch Payroll records to prefill where possible, if needed employers can now add eligible employees who are not currently listed.

The ATO is consulting with TPSG members on letters of JobKeeper registered client lists to be issued to tax professionals in the week beginning 7 September.

The ATO is waiting for JobKeeper 2 legislation to be passed by the Senate. Once this legislation is passed, the Treasurer will be able to make the rules to support the JobKeeper extension. Once the Legislation is passed and rules are registered the ATO will issue guidance material relating to the changes.

Tips and links

- We have published three new guides relating to JobKeeper: [Employers not reporting through STP](#), [Employers reporting through STP](#) and a guide for [Sole traders](#). All of these guides can be saved as a PDF document or printed following the buttons at the top-right of the screen.
- See our published list on [matters we are consulting the community on](#), including their current status and purpose, who we are consulting, and when they are expected to be completed.

Next meeting date

The next Tax Practitioner Stewardship Group Tax time 2020 meeting will be held on Tuesday 8 September.

Tax Time update – 25 August 2020

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/TPSG---tax-time-key-messages/Tax-Time-update---25-August-2020/>
- Last modified: 31 Aug 2020
- QC 63524

Service Delivery

Call volumes are slowing down, however calls are still 7% up on last year, with wait times averaging around 90 seconds. The length of calls is longer than last year with the nature of calls coming through continuing to focus on stimulus measures and usual tax time queries.

The tax agent phone line opened in July is still operating, with over 250 calls received on the weekend.

Communications

Tax professional's newsletter

Last week's newsletter included articles on:

- National Scams Awareness Week.
- JobKeeper eligibility update.
- [New Fast Key Code \(FKC\)](#) available for agents who have JobKeeper telephony enquiries.

This week's newsletter will include articles on:

- Changing business structures – helping clients who have changed to more complex business structures avoid common errors.
- Tax InVoice podcast - [Managing residential rental properties in a time of crisis](#).

Articles in development

COVID-19

- More employees now able to access JobKeeper.
- COVID-19 and car fringe benefits.

Superannuation

- Change to age limits on superannuation contributions.

Other

- Activity statement reminder notifications.
- Corporate tax transparency data extraction.
- [19-year tax fraud probe](#) ends in jail time for scheme promoter.
- Our [ATO Corporate plan](#) has been released.
- ATO presence in Geelong will continue.

Individual communications

- Help and Support messages on a variety of topics via social media – rental deductions and translated tax time toolkit materials.

Small business communications

- Web content on [business losses](#) has been updated recently.
- Small business newsroom articles on [business losses](#) and government payments and grants went live last week.
- Social media on PAYGW deductions, business losses and government payments and grants are being promoted this week.

Cash flow boost stimulus measure

Allocation of the second round of cash flow boosts is continuing and tracking as forecasted.

Numbers of cash flow boost complaints about eligibility have reduced significantly. The ATO acknowledges that there are a very small number of aged eligibility review cases and these are being actioned as a priority.

Ineligibility of entities new to business is one of the themes we are seeing come through in recent complaints. This issue is also being raised in some of the cash flow boost related objections we have received.

JobKeeper update

The legislation for the changes to the JobKeeper rules that took effect earlier this month regarding eligibility based on the 1 July employment status have been passed and [web guidance](#) has been updated to reflect this. There was also an announcement on the payment discretion until the end of August, where employers have the ability to make payments for fortnight 10, and 11 until the end of this month.

The ATO has allocated additional staff to manage cases that have applied for Commissioner's discretion regarding eligible business participants. This has resulted in a reduction in call volumes requesting updates on their cases.

The ATO is receiving deferral requests for applications to enter JobKeeper. Some of these relate back to the commencement of the program, and a number of these have been from tax practitioners stating they were either overwhelmed or that they have misunderstood the process regarding eligibility.

Legislation to extend the current date of 31 December 2020 is before Parliament this week. This must be passed prior to allow the Treasurer to determine rules regarding the extension of JobKeeper to the end of March 2021. The ATO is awaiting rules to be passed so that guidance material can be published, and taxpayers and their agents can be contacted to advise what needs to be completed for JobKeeper 2.

Tips and links

- We [publish information](#) about how we are performing against our commitments to service. By doing so, we honour our commitment to transparent management, accountability for results and client-centred service delivery.
- The [July 2020 ATO impersonation scam report](#) provides a snapshot of the scam intelligence we received and the mitigation strategies we employed.

Next meeting date

The next Tax Practitioner Stewardship Group Tax time 2020 meeting will be held on Tuesday 1 September.

Tax Time update – 11 August 2020

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/TPSG---tax-time-key-messages/Tax-Time-update---11-August-2020/>
- Last modified: 18 Aug 2020
- QC 63434

Service Delivery

Call volumes received by the ATO have reduced recently, however calls are still 10% up on last year.

The nature of calls continues to focus on stimulus measures predominantly JobKeeper. There has been a reduction in calls relating to the early release of Superannuation.

Information on the demographics of callers will be shared with members out of session.

Communications

In response to the current COVID-19 situation in Victoria, the ATO has recently:

- issued a letter (via email) to all tax professionals based in Victoria, or who have clients in Victoria, offering recognition and support of the current circumstances due to continuing COVID-19 restrictions
- published a tax professionals newsroom article reiterating the support available to the broader tax professional community.

Tax professional's newsletter

This week's newsletter will include articles on:

- Tax treatment of [government grants and payments during COVID-19](#).
- A reminder to for agents to add emails received from tp@news.ato.gov.au to their safe sender list to receive system advice and alerts in the future.

Articles in development

Tax time

- Updated employees guide for work expenses – Includes information on the shortcut method for work from home expenses and deductibility of protective items.
- 2020 Tax Time Toolkits – encouraging agents to bookmark and share the resources with their clients.

Other

- Top 1000 & Top 100 GST assurance program - Prepare for engagements by requesting our new GST Governance, Data Testing and Transaction Testing guide.
- Exposure draft released for Foreign Investment Reforms Bill 2020 – public consultation open.

Individual communications

- Help and Support video message for those who continue to be impacted by COVID-19 posted to our social media channels last week.
- Social media on WRE/Occupations/Rentals – specifically office workers, construction workers, those working from home and those with rental properties.

Small business communications

- Social media on PAYG Withholding deductions

Cash flow boost stimulus measure

The ATO has contacted a small number of cash flow boost recipients where out of pattern behaviour has been observed, or unusual amounts are recorded in activity statements in the salary and wages amounts or PAYG withholding. In response, a number of taxpayers have amended activity statements, correcting errors that have occurred.

A small number of cases have amended amounts listed in salary and wages, reducing these numbers by minimal amounts such as \$1. This sort of behaviour does attract attention and the ATO will be following this up further. The overall response has been pleasing, with people forthcoming and correcting errors.

The ATO will continue to work with those who may have been refunded amounts that need to be repaid.

JobKeeper update

On Friday 7 August, the Prime Minister issued a [Media Release](#) ² regarding changes to JobKeeper 1 and 2.

Key adjustments include:

- A change to the employee reference date - from 3 August 2020, the relevant date of employment for an eligible employee will move from 1 March to 1 July 2020, expanding employee eligibility.
- A change to the turnover reference period - to be eligible for JobKeeper post 28 September 2020, organisations will only have to demonstrate that their actual turnovers have significantly declined in the previous quarter.

As a result, organisations that are able to demonstrate a significant decline in turnover in the September 2020 quarter will be able to access the JobKeeper extension in the December quarter. An organisation able to demonstrate the requisite decline in turnover in the December 2020 quarter would be able to access the JobKeeper extension in the March 2021 quarter.

Tips and links

- If your business makes a loss in an income year, you can carry forward that loss and may be able to [claim a deduction for it in a future year](#).
- Interest on a loan for a rental property is [deductible](#) in the year it is incurred. Some lenders have introduced arrangements where their customers impacted by COVID-19 can elect not to make mortgage payments for a period of time, and any interest that is unpaid is capitalised. A taxpayer who enters this type of arrangement can still claim the interest amount in the financial year it is incurred, even though the interest amount now forms part of the loan capital. See our COVID-19 page on [Residential rental property](#) for more details.
- If you have been working in an occupation that requires physical contact or close proximity with customers or clients during the COVID-19 period, you may be able to [claim a deduction](#) for items such as gloves, face masks, sanitiser or anti-bacterial spray if you have paid for the items and haven't been reimbursed.

- We understand that due to COVID-19, a trustee may experience [liquidity issues](#) which may affect its ability to satisfy a beneficiary's entitlement. This may happen where financial institutions impose restrictions that affect the way a trustee can deal with its assets.

Next meeting date

The next Tax Practitioner Stewardship Group Tax time 2020 meeting will be held on Tuesday 25 August.

Tax Time update – 4 August 2020

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/TPSG---tax-time-key-messages/Tax-Time-update---4-August-2020/>
- Last modified: 12 Aug 2020
- QC 63417

Service Delivery

Call volumes received by the ATO continue to be busy, with calls still 20% up on last year. The ATO assured members that the situation in Victoria would not impact on the ATO's service standards for calls.

At the last meeting members requested an analysis of the top phone calls received by ATO contact centres from tax professionals. This was in response to a 20% increase in phone calls received by this segment. The most common call topics include:

- JobKeeper applications.
- JobKeeper payments.
- Cash flow boost eligibility.
- JobKeeper enrolments.
- account explanations and lodgment enquiries.

The volume of queries regarding stimulus measures accounts for the increase in tax professional calls received by ATO contact centres.

Information on the demographics of callers will be shared with members at a future meeting.

Support for Victorian based professionals

The ATO appreciates the challenging situation faced by Victorian tax professionals at this time and will do whatever possible to support those affected from an administration perspective.

Members would like to see something similar to the response to the bushfire disasters from the ATO as the Victorian Government has declared a state disaster. The key points discussed were:

- Members noted that what was done in response to the bushfire disaster should be considered for this situation, ensuring maximum flexibility without penalties as much as possible.
- Other suggestions included allowing Victorian businesses to vary their PAYG instalments to “nil” without penalty and the prioritisation of refunds through adjustments to reporting periods for GST (noting these administrative measures remain available to affected businesses as outlined on the ato.gov.au [COVID-19 homepage](#)).
- It was noted that access to some of the stimulus measures is based on lodgment of an activity statement.
- Members noted the difficulties that the restrictions would cause from a practice management perspective such as access to files, receiving paperwork from clients and even accessing post-boxes and collecting incoming mail.
- Not all businesses use cloud-based software and members noted that additional assistance will be required for these clients for essential services such as completing payroll and administering JobKeeper payments.
- Consideration also needs to be given to the emotional and financial impact the restrictions will cause to many tax practitioners.

Communications

Tax Time 2020 video series

The ATO are tailoring specific communications to those affected by the situation in Victoria, the overarching message is about acknowledging what is currently happening and how the ATO can best assist those who are affected.

Communications will include reference to the support already available:

- Deferring due dates for payments.
- Varying PAYG instalments.
- Arrangements for payment by instalments.
- Working with clients to put these arrangements in place.

The ATO understands that taxpayers are reliant on stimulus measures and will be working on communications regarding this. The ATO requests that those who are able to lodge continue to do so, and to make contact to discuss any difficulties being experienced and for support. We would look to continue our flexible lodgment approach to business activity statement obligations that fall due during August and September which in practice means that there won't be failure to lodge penalties applied.

A personalised message from the Commissioner will be issued to those affected by the situation in Victoria, with information on their options during this difficult time.

Focus of the next Tax professional's newsletter

- Support for Victorian tax professionals:
 - Reiterate support available to all agents, including access to lodgment and payment deferrals and General Interest Charge (GIC) remissions.
 - Let Victorian agents know that the ATO will continue to take a flexible approach to lodgments, noting that GIC will still accrue but we will be flexible with remission requests.
 - The ATO will also be providing support messages to other audiences in the community, including through our social media channels, small and large business newsletters and various stewardship groups.
- This week's focus includes:
 - A reminder that applications for superannuation guarantee (SG) amnesty ends on 7 September 2020.
 - An update to Operation Elbrus outcomes.

Articles in development

Tax time

- Tax Time 2020 short tips video series - promotion of the whole series of videos that are [now available on ato.gov.au](https://www.ato.gov.au).
- 2020 Tax time - summary of non-individual form changes.

COVID-19

- Monthly JobKeeper business declaration for July due on 14 August.
- Treatment of JobKeeper overpayments.
- COVID-19 website update – Answers to FAQs have been integrated across our website. Archived FAQs can be found in our legal database.

Other topics

- Deferred GST on imported goods – new applicants who lodge deferred GST applications can be backdated to a monthly cycle from 1 July 2020.
- Fuel tax credits (FTC) rates - no changes to FTC rates for businesses on 3 August.

Early release of Superannuation update

The Government has recently announced their intention to extend the timeframe to apply for Early Release of Super to 31 December 2020. At this stage no legislation has been passed and when that occurs we'll notify members of that development.

The ATO will share further information on compliance activities being undertaken regarding applications for the Early Release of Super and the associated risks such as fraud and re-contribution schemes at a future meeting.

Cash flow boost stimulus measure

The ATO has contacted the majority of businesses which cases had been

escalated in relation to cash flow boost, to advise them that progress is underway. It is expected that all businesses will have been contacted within the next two weeks.

Members are asked to provide details of specific cases where taxpayers are eligible for JobKeeper, and not for the cash flow boost so the ATO can ensure that these cases have been correctly assessed.

Members would like further information on how the Inspector General of Taxation's office is handling cases where the eligibility requirements have not been met and what their processes are.

Tips and links

- The ATO have clarified their position on [loans that have been put on hold during COVID-19](#).
- See [new guidance](#) on employer Pay as you go (PAYG) withholding registration, for employees working in Australia temporarily due to COVID-19 effects on travel.
- The ATO must receive your or your clients' superannuation guarantee (SG) amnesty applications by 11.59pm local time on 7 September 2020. Check you and your clients have the necessary payment reference numbers (PRNs) required to make payments.

Next meeting date

The next Tax Practitioner Stewardship Group Tax time 2020 meeting will be held on Tuesday 11 August.

Tax Time update – 28 July 2020

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/TPSG---tax-time-key-messages/Tax-Time-update---28-July-2020/>
- Last modified: 03 Aug 2020
- QC 63333

Service Delivery

Call volumes received by the ATO continue to be busy, with calls being 20% up on last year. The average wait time for calls is currently less than 2 minutes.

The nature of calls remains consistent with past weeks and key topics include:

- income tax return related questions such as assistance with returns not necessary, and progress of returns
- stimulus measure enquiries regarding JobKeeper and early release of Super.

We have not yet seen a spike in calls following recent JobKeeper announcements.

The ATO is still seeing a similar lodgment trend to previous weeks, with increased numbers compared to the same time last year.

The tax agent phone line is continuing to operate on Saturdays and Sundays from 10:00am – 4:00pm (local times) throughout July. Over the weekend there was a total of 255 calls received.

Systems and maintenance

ATO systems have been stable, however there were some minor impacts on SBR2 on Saturday 25 July, and Monday 27 July. These impacts were resolved quickly and did not affect the community.

A proof of concept solution has been put in place that aims to resolve the performance issues with the ATO Legal Database. This solution will be monitored for the next few weeks to further refine and to ultimately establish whether it is successful or not.

Tax practitioners should review the ATO's [system maintenance page](#) for details of scheduled maintenance and links to troubleshooting advice, technical help and the Performance Dashboards.

Subscribe to [Tax professionals alerts](#) to receive email or SMS notification for unplanned Online services for agents or PLS maintenance windows and functionality issues.

Communications

Tax Time 2020 video series

[This week's video](#) [📺] featuring Assistant Commissioner Trent Jakubowski focuses on rental deductions and instant asset write off. Trent also speaks about the impacts COVID-19 may have on rental income and the importance of getting deductions right this tax time, as well as the expansion of the instant asset write-off.

Supporting articles include:

Own a rental? – what you need to know this tax time – linking to [media release](#) from 25 June 2020.

Articles in development

Tax time, and part of the supporting agents to self-serve online strategy

- Reminders for agents they can submit a non-lodgment advice of update financial institution account details for their clients using Online services for agents.

Other topics

- There will be a message in our newsletter reflecting the current issues in the Legal Database, and we will hope to provide ongoing updates pending the success of system fixes
- Single Touch Payroll (STP) finalisations are now overdue
- Tax time resources available in 17 languages – directs agents to translated resources for their clients, downloadable from our Publication Ordering Service.
- Franking account tax return and instructions 2020.
- Cancelled private health insurance and Medicare levy surcharge (MLS) – Provides information about the MLS that may be applicable if clients have stopped or suspended their private health insurance.
- Cash flow boost payment estimator calculator

Individual communication

- Providing information for individuals to address the issue of prior years' tax returns appearing in myTax as requiring action.
- Social media posts this week have focussed on helping individuals:
 - Check the progress of their return
 - Find out about Tax Help
 - The Working from Home advertising campaign has now finished.

Small business communication

- Updating our Business Losses web content, to make it clearer in preparation for promotion next month.
- We'll also be publishing a video featuring Assistant Commissioner Andrew Watson about business losses on Monday 3 August, with further social media promotion during the month.

Tax Practitioners Board update

As previously discussed, bulk preparers were concerned about lodging returns prior to Single Touch Payroll finalisation and having to turn clients away. Guidance suggests that it would be good practice for tax practitioners that do have concerns of the reasonable care portion of the code of conduct, to get a declaration signed by clients prior to lodgment acknowledging that the clients employer may finalise their statement with a different amount, or that the tax return may need to be amended and any additional tax pay be payable by the client.


Cash flow boost stimulus measure

The ATO has implemented an approach starting Monday 27 July following feedback from this group, where after a client contacts the ATO contact centre asking about eligibility and the request needs to be escalated, they will now receive an acknowledgement email containing a reference number. This ensures the client that their enquiry has been received by the right area and it is being actioned. The reference number will also be visible to the contact centre therefore if contact is made again, the process is not restarting.

As discussed last week, the ATO has started issuing correspondence to a small group of cash flow boost recipients as part of compliance activities. The letters have been issued to cash flow boost recipients where we have seen out of pattern behaviour, or unusual amounts recorded in Activity Statements in the salary and wages amounts, or PAYG withholding. We are concerned that these errors could impact the cash flow boost credit amount received.

Letters started to issue on Friday 24 July, and an example of these letters was issued to TPSG members on the same day for their information and awareness. Also included in the communication to TPSG members was a link to the ATO's new cash flow boost estimator tool that is available on our [website](#).

JobKeeper update

On Tuesday 21 July the Government made the announcement regarding the extension of the JobKeeper program from 6 to 12 months. There is a [fact sheet](#)  and information available on the Treasury website.

Key points in the fact sheet are:

- Re-test of eligibility for all organisations, this is a case of moving from projected, to actual GST and covers all quarters. To go forward post September, you must pass the turnover test for both the June and September quarters. There is then another retest at the end of December for eligibility for the last three months of JobKeeper.
- Payments are decreasing in value from \$1500 per fortnight for everybody into a tier system of \$1200 and \$750 for the first three months, and then \$1000 and \$650 for the last three months of the program. This is based on a work test of 20 hours or more per week.

The ATO has limited information available to be shared with members while the measure is pre-law, however we are anticipating that the law should be passed with time before people have to make decisions about continuing in JobKeeper. Once the law is in place, the ATO will publish guidance to assist employers and tax professionals in making decisions regarding JobKeeper.

Information regarding JobKeeper overpayment is yet to be published on the ATO website, we are expecting this to go up shortly. The ATO encourages those who have identified an error to correct as quickly as possible to minimise the risk of over payment.

Tips and links

- From 20 July 2020, if you have employees who work for a childcare subsidy (CCS) approved provider they will no longer be eligible for JobKeeper payments.
- There are some [important steps](#) you need to take before you start your Single Touch Payroll (STP) reporting.
- Some of your clients may receive a refund from the Services Australia income compliance program. Find out more.

Next meeting date

The next Tax Practitioner Stewardship Group Tax time 2020 meeting will be held on Tuesday 4 August.

Tax Time update – 21 July 2020

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/TPSG---tax-time-key-messages/Tax-Time-update---21-July-2020/>
- Last modified: 30 Jul 2020
- QC 63299

Service Delivery

Call volumes received by the ATO continue to be high, however have decreased since last week, which is a similar trend seen at the same time last year.

The nature of calls remains consistent with past weeks and key topics include:

- linking codes for myGov
- income tax return related questions such as assistance with returns not necessary, progress of returns and account explanations
- stimulus measure enquiries such as support for calculating turnover for JobKeeper, eligibility and progress of payment and early release of Super enquiries regarding progress of application and eligibility.

The tax agent phone line is continuing to operate on Saturdays and Sundays from 10:00am – 4:00pm (local times) throughout July.

The ATO is seeing a lodgment trend similar to last week with increased numbers compared to the same time last year.

Individuals and Intermediaries

The ATO will provide information and links to support material in an upcoming *Tax Professionals newsletter* to assist those located in COVID-19 lockdown areas.

A current focus is on providing information to taxpayers to assist them with their income tax return lodgments. This includes clarifying information on work related expenses and the 80 cent per hour shortcut method and informing taxpayers how income such as JobSeeker, JobKeeper and other forms of income that they may have not previously received is reported in their tax return.

Systems and maintenance

ATO systems have been stable over the last week with no major issues.

The ATO is addressing the issues with the ATO Legal Database and are planning to pilot a fix this week to resolve the issues. If successful, the fix will be deployed to production in coming weeks.

Tax practitioners should review the ATO's [system maintenance page](#) for details of scheduled maintenance and links to troubleshooting advice, technical help and the Performance Dashboards.

Subscribe to [Tax professionals alerts](#) to receive email or SMS notification for unplanned Online services for agents or PLS maintenance windows and functionality issues.

Digital Services

Pre-fill data

Interest and dividend data continue to be loaded into prefill as received.

The [2020 Pre-fill availability](#) webpage on ato.gov.au for tax time is live and will be updated daily as data becomes available.

Digital service provider (DSP) update

Overall DSP readiness is high with only a small number of DSPs outstanding.

Online Services for Agents (OSfA)

There were no significant new issues or unscheduled outages.

Practitioner Lodgment Service (PLS)

There were no significant new issues or unscheduled outages.

Communications

Tax Time 2020 video series

[This week's video](#)¹⁷ featuring Assistant Commissioner Sylvia Gallagher focuses on progress of return and Online Services for Agents. Sylvia also speaks about the new granular data reporting and communications functionality and their benefits.

Supporting articles include:

- Progress of return – article about how agents can access progress of return functions online and the benefits
- Communications preferencing and granular data – links to existing web content to promote these features

Articles in development

Tax crime/scams

- Prevent data breaches – this article is to provide information to the community about security and safety measures they can take at tax time to prevent being the victim of cyber crimes
- Tax crime prosecution case studies

Other topics

- JobKeeper update - child care
- Transfer pricing arrangements and JobKeeper payments
- Tax treatment of Services Australia income compliance program refunds

Individual communication

- The ATO announced the working from home shortcut extension – now until 30 September. The ATO and the minister issued a [Media Release](#)²⁷ regarding this extension. Notifications for this were included in the Tax Professionals Newsroom and promoted through social media channels.
- Guidance has been published on how the new shortcut method applies with [future calculations of depreciating assets](#)
- The Working from Home advertising campaign that commenced on 22 June will finish this week.

Small business communication

- Updates are being made to Business Losses web content, to make it clearer for the audience in preparation for promotion next month.
- Responses to questions received following Andrew Watson's myBusiness webinar last week will be published in two upcoming articles.

JobKeeper update

Requests for the Commissioner to apply discretion in relation to the alternate turnover test are being handled within the 14 days service standard. A small number of cases were stopped for compliance checking, and all of those cases should have received contact from the ATO.

Common errors made by Eligible Business Participants include:

- Both partners in a partnership claiming JobKeeper one as the eligible business participant and employee.
- Company directors registering themselves as Eligible Business Participants for every company they are a director for.
- Eligible business participant is listed as an employee with another entity.

The ATO will consider pending Government announcements on JobKeeper changes and will work with members to implement communicate any required changes.

Cash flow boost stimulus measure

The ATO has recently published some updates to our cash flow boost related web contents. In particular the content has been updated to include further detail and

information on the tax consequences and treatment of cash flow boost credits. We have also provided some further examples of how cash flow boost credits appear in the activity statement account summary.

The updated web content includes a link to a cash flow boost estimator tool. This estimator allows users to input their reported W1 and W2 label amounts across one or multiple tax periods to obtain an estimate of the cash flow boost credit they may receive in a particular tax period. It should be noted that this is an estimate only and other factors can affect the final credit paid.

This week we will be starting to issue correspondence for a small group of cash flow boost recipients as part of our compliance activities. The letters are being issued for cash flow boost recipients where we have seen an unusual or unexpected change in the amount of salary and wages and/or withholding amounts they have reported in recent activity statements. We are asking these clients to check the amounts reported. We are concerned a mistake could have been made and they may have received an incorrect cash flow boost amount. If this is the case, we will not impose penalties and will remit interest if the client revises their activity statement to correct it.

Tips and links

- The government has announced [proposed changes](#) to the JobKeeper Payment program, these proposed changes will not impact JobKeeper Payments until after 28 September 2020.
- [Temporary cash flow boosts](#) will support small and medium businesses and not-for-profit organisations during the economic downturn associated with COVID-19. Eligible businesses and not-for-profit (NFP) organisations who employ staff will receive between \$20,000 to \$100,000 in cash flow boost amounts by lodging their activity statements up to the month or quarter of September 2020.

Next meeting date

The next Tax Practitioner Stewardship Group Tax time 2020 meeting will be held on Tuesday 28 July.

Tax Time update – 14 July 2020

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/TPSG---tax-time-key-messages/TaxTime-update---14-July-2020/>
- Last modified: 20 Jul 2020
- QC 63217

Service Delivery

Call volumes received by the ATO continue to trend higher than the same time last year, with a record number of calls received on Monday 13 July 2020.

The tax agent phone line will continue to open on Saturdays and Sundays from 10.00am – 4.00pm (local times) throughout July.

The ATO are seeing an increase in lodgments received compared to the same time last year.

Individuals and Intermediaries

The ATO acknowledge that taxpayers located in COVID-19 impacted lockdown areas may experience difficulties in terms of being able to meet with their tax practitioner to complete their lodgment obligations.

The ATO understands that additional support will be required and are preparing communication products to support both agents and clients in impacted areas.

Tax practitioners are encouraged to contact the ATO if additional [support](#) is required by their practice.

Systems and maintenance

ATO systems have been stable over the last week, with systems continuing to be monitored and regular changes being made in the background to enhance system performance.

The ATO is aware of issues with the ATO Legal Database and are in the process of making changes to improve the performance of this platform.

Tax practitioners should review the ATO's [system maintenance page](#) for details of scheduled maintenance and links to troubleshooting advice, technical help and the Performance Dashboards.

Subscribe to [Tax professionals alerts](#) to receive email or SMS notification for unplanned Online services for agents or PLS maintenance windows and functionality issues.

Digital Services

Pre-fill data

The majority of private health insurance and welfare data has now been loaded into prefill, with interest and dividend data continuing to be loaded as received.

The [2020 Pre-fill availability](#) webpage on ato.gov.au for tax time is live and will be updated daily as data becomes available.

Digital service provider (DSP) update

Overall DSP readiness is high and there are no major concerns with those

outstanding.

Online Services for Agents (OSfA)

There were no significant new issues or unscheduled outages in the week 6 – 12 July.

Practitioner Lodgment Service (PLS)

There were no significant new issues or unscheduled outages in the week 6 – 12 July.

Communications

The [Tax Time 2020 Toolkit- General](#) and [Small Business Tax Time Toolkit](#) are now live

The 'Working from Home' advertising campaign went live on 22 June and will run until 25 July, directing taxpayers to information about how to claim the 80 cents per hour method for each hour spent working from home.

Tax Time 2020 video series

There is a [Tax Time 2020 quick tips video](#)[↗] available, with the latest video starring Assistant Commissioner Sylvia Gallagher reminding agents of STP deadlines and to only use information that is tax ready. Sylvia also speaks about the payment plan functionality in Online Services for Agents.

Supporting articles include:

- Only lodge with 'tax ready' information - how to access income statement information and what to do if the information is not yet tax ready.
- A better payment experience – payment plan functionality in Online services for agents.

Articles in development

Tax Time topics

- Reporting business income.
- What's new in pre-filling? – article about new functions in prefill this year.
- Don't let your clients miss out on deductions for payments to workers.

Other topics

- Extension of contact centre hours.
- Taxable payments annual report (TPAR).
- Scam alerts.
- 2020 depreciation and capital allowances tool.

Cash flow boost stimulus measure

There are a small amount of cases where claims are being held up for eligibility reviews. These are related to the evidence needed to prove that they were carrying on a business prior to 12 March 2020 and had made eligible payments.

Some claimants who did not have an ABN, or who weren't registered for PAYGW on ATO systems prior to 12 March 2020 and have lodged back-dated information to support potential eligibility. These taxpayers have been asked for further evidence to support their claims.

JobKeeper program update and changes to childcare sector

The feedback provided by tax practitioners on additional functionality to assist in completing tax returns, particularly for including JobKeeper payments in accessible income, is being considered by the ATO.

The suggestions provided to the ATO include:

- Providing the information in business transactions through payment systems prefill, which can be provided to tax practitioners as a report.
- Providing tax practitioners with a list of ABNs that are enrolled in and receiving JobKeeper payments.
- Ensure the information continues to be displayed through the online services landing page.

Changes to the childcare sector

On 8 June 2020 the Government announced changes to the childcare sector in a [press release](#)[□] by the Minister for Education.

As well as changes to the JobKeeper payment (which are administered by the ATO), the Minister also announced changes to payments administered by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE), including:

- a stop to the temporary Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) relief packages that were in place taking effect from 12 July and
- the reintroduction of the childcare subsidy and additional childcare subsidy, as well as the commencement of a new transition payment taking effect from 13 July.

Changes to the JobKeeper rules were registered on 6 July and come into effect from Fortnight 9, which commences 20 July. Under the new [rules](#)[□], JobKeeper payments will cease for:


- employees of an approved provider of childcare services, if the employees' ordinary duties relate principally to the operation of those services and
- eligible business participants where the business entity is an approved provider of a childcare service.

Eligibility is to be determined based on whether an employee's duties are principally related to the provision of a childcare service. The [explanatory statement](#)[□] and

updates to the ATO web content provide some examples to assist in making this determination.

It is important to note, that although these changes come into effect on 20 July, they will not impact on the August declaration process which covers Fortnight 8 (up until 19 July). But they will impact on the September declaration process (which fortnights 9, 10 and 11).

For more information and useful links see also:

- [JobKeeper Payment – Frequently Asked Questions \(PDF, 220KB\)](#) 
- [JobKeeper Payment – Information for employees \(PDF, 146KB\)](#) 

Tips and links

- Over the weekend of 20–21 June 2020, the latest ATO Online system release was completed. The release includes improvements designed to provide a better experience for super providers and tax professionals as well as updates to the ATO online simulator.
- When you [dispose of a depreciating asset](#) (that is, it's sold, lost, destroyed, or you stop using it, or expect never to use it again), you may need to make a balancing adjustment (the adjustable value minus termination value).
- On the application of the Commissioner's remedial powers: the Commissioner of Taxation has limited powers to modify the operation of tax law in circumstances where entities will benefit, or at least be no worse off, as a result of the modification. We have provided an [index](#) on our website of situations where the Commissioner's remedial powers were considered and not applied.

Next meeting date

The next Tax Practitioner Stewardship Group Tax time 2020 meeting will be held on Tuesday 21 July.

Tax Time update - 30 June 2020

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/TPSG---tax-time-key-messages/Tax-Time-update---30-June-2020/>
 - Last modified: 06 Jul 2020
 - QC 63120
-

Lodgment stats as of 02 July 2020

	Overall - year to	Current year	Comparison -
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Lodgments – type and channel	date returns received as at 02/07/2020	returns received as at 02/07/2020	Current year returns received as at 02/07/2019
Individual – electronic	270,928	230,050	165,759
Non-Individual – electronic	22,589	2,585	1,995
Self-Preparer – myTax	222,458	210,174	142,947
Tax Practitioner – Practitioner Lodgment Service (PLS)	70,058	21,805	23,275

Please note: Paper statistics have been removed from this table as lodgments via paper may not be represented in statistics during the 56-day processing service standard.

Service Delivery

Deputy Commissioner Grant Brodie advised that calls received yesterday were 7% higher than the same time last week, with an average wait time of 7 minutes. The nature of the calls remains consistent, focusing on linking codes and stimulus measures. It is anticipated that calls will increase significantly from tomorrow with the commencement of tax time.

Assistant Commissioner Frances McMorrow advised that almost 4,000 lodgments have been received in the safety net pilot, with 2,800 received through PLS and the remainder via myTax and paper returns. It was noted that the volume of paper returns received to date is lower than the same time last year.

A small number of returns have been released through the safety net with correspondence and refunds issuing yesterday. No significant issues have been identified through the pilot to date and ATO systems are processing returns correctly.

Debt and Lodgment

Deputy Commissioner Vivek Chaudhary provided an update on debt and lodgment activities. The current focus is on responding to the high volume of requests being received by clients for assistance with managing their outstanding lodgment and payment obligations.

The ATO temporarily suspended intervention processes and are now looking to recommence some outbound activities using a gradual phased approach. The first phase is piloting a SMS campaign to a small group of taxpayers. The Payment

Receivables Management (PRM) system capability implemented with the Activity Statement Financial Processing (ASFP) deployment in December has not yet been fully utilised. Letters associated with the recommencement of engagement activities will be generated through PRM.

Members are advised that tax practitioners may start to receive SMS and letters on behalf of their clients or by clients directly. Members requested that communication not be sent via SMS when the communication preference is set to be delivered to tax practitioners, as this is difficult for agents to manage. The ATO is conscious of this and is testing in the first phase of the pilot.

Communications

Director Michael Job provided an update on upcoming communication activities. The ATO's planned and proactive tax time messages are ramping up to ensure that tax professionals have all the information they need to support their clients.

Upcoming communication products

Upcoming Tax professionals newsletter articles include:

- Tax Time 2020 video series
 - This week's video focuses on Tax Time Toolkits, work-related expenses and gifts and donations.
- Tax Time
 - 10 things to know this tax time
 - 2020 Tax Time Toolkits
 - Are your client's residents for tax purposes?
- COVID-19
 - JobKeeper turnover test for non-government schools
 - COVID-19-relief: Changes to the ACR and SMSF IAR instructions
- Work-related expenses
 - Tax inVoice podcast – Work-related expenses Part 2
 - Gifts and donations
- Lodgment
 - Lodgment program

Social media

- LinkedIn posts:
 - Video: Tax Time Toolkits, WRE and gifts and donations
 - Article: 10 things to know this tax time

General toolkit and Occupation guides

The ATO will release a suite of occupation toolkits from 1 July 2020. These include:

- Ten new occupation posters on the ATO website (for agriculture, lawyers, bus drivers, factory workers, paramedics, pilots, engineers, performing artists, fire fighters and call centre operators).
- Tax Time toolkits (for aviation, construction, education, government, health, real estate, retail and transport and logistics, rental properties, Small Business).

Some occupation posters will be translated into five different languages, with 19 new translated products for this Tax Time. Products will also be promoted to culturally and linguistically diverse third-party contacts.

From 1 July we will promote our Tax Time 2020 General Toolkit; which is a combined view of all the industry-based toolkits and a central location for tax professionals to access the information they may need to assist their clients. The General Toolkit also includes the new rental property damaged/destroyed posters which are part of the rental toolkit. All toolkits and occupation posters will be available from ato.gov.au/taxtimetoolkits.

Digital Services

Assistant Commissioner Kerry O’Loughlin provided an update on Digital Services.

Pre-fill data

- The loading of data received to date to pre-fill has commenced.
- A number of annual investment income report (AIIR) files, predominately dividend files have been received.
- The pre-fill availability webpage on ato.gov.au for Tax Time is live and will be updated daily as data is made available in pre-fill.

Digital service provider (DSP) update

- Overall DSP readiness is at 80% (compared to 70% last week), which is similar to last year’s trend.
 - Income tax return is at 76% (67%) readiness and on track
 - Partnership tax return is at 85% (78%) and on track.
- All major tax professional software providers have confirmed with the Digital Partnership Office (DPO) they are ‘Tax Time 2020 ready’.

Online services for agents (OSfA)

For the week 22 - 28 June there were 108,000 logins to OSFA, which is 21,000 less than the week prior. Usage will continue to be monitored on a weekly basis.

The reduction in OSFA logins may be due in part to the increase in PLS transactions, signifying a shift in focus for agents. This is consistent with expectations at tax time.

PLS

For the week 22-28 June, 440,059 transactions received (compared to 400,992 last week).

Self preparers

Tax Time 2020 products are ready for 1 July. There is a focus across a number of products in ensuring that clients are aware of the COVID-19 changes where there may be different obligations/ entitlement this year.

Small Business

Assistant Commissioner Andrew Watson provided an update on Small Business activities.

The ATO are continuing to communicate the changes for the Instant Asset Write-off and provide advice for claiming home office expenses. A small business tax time toolkit will shortly be published linking to useful factsheets for small business.

There are approximately 500,000 employers finalising their single touch payroll for the first time this year. Although not due until 31 July, the ATO is encouraging employers to finalise as early as possible so that their employee information is 'tax ready' and can be included in pre-fill data.

Members advised that some payroll software being used is sending the ATO final messages because it was the last pay run of the year. The user is unaware that the software has automatically done this, and no declaration has been completed prior to sending to the ATO.

Members raised concerns that current EOFY media advertising encouraging clients to purchase assets prior to 30 June may be misleading clients regarding deduction claims for assets if they are also planning to use the short-cut deduction method. The rules and advice regarding depreciation and the decline in value for future years should also be highlighted by the ATO.

Small Business Superannuation Clearing House

Assistant Commissioner Sonia Corsini responded to members reporting that issues are still being experienced since the upgrade.

Members advised that inactive employees are still being displayed causing issues with the submitting of forms for active employees. This issue should now have been resolved.

There are still a few residual issues relating to circumstances when an employee has changed superannuation funds or their fund has undergone a fund transfer and either the unique superannuation identifier has changed or the member number has changed. Where this has occurred, and it is an invalid number the form will not submit. Users will now receive a message informing them of what the problem is.

Members are invited to provide examples of any ongoing issues to the TPSG mailbox.

Supporting tax professionals to self-serve online

Assistant Commissioner Alex Pereira provided members with an overview of a proposal to encourage tax professionals to self-serve using ATO online options.

The aim is to increase the use of Online Services for Agents (OSFA) for those functions that can be self-served, resulting in shorter wait times for calls that tax professionals cannot self-serve for. It should also provide a time saving benefit as self-serve options are quicker and can be done at any time that suits the tax professional's schedule.

This encouragement will involve providing tax professionals with clear information and communication through the right channels. ATO call centre staff will also have improved information so they can provide better support and educate about using OSFA when tax professionals call.

The current priority is to increase online interactions for three functions this tax time, and reduce the flow of calls for these topics:

- Checking the progress of a return.
- Updating financial institution details.
- Submitting non-lodgment advice.

Members observed that many agents are using practice management software for all their client interactions and not all features are available to effectively interact with the ATO. They may prefer not to change to OSFA for some transactions and therefore prefer to contact the ATO by phone. They recommended that functionality be made available via software in the first instance.

Some agents may also have had negative experiences in the past with transactions not being successfully processed and therefore lack confidence in the system. In calling the ATO they have confidence that the transaction is completed and a receipt number provided for their assurance.

Members recommended the ATO perform more profiling on tax professionals performing actions over the phone to determine what the drivers for contacting the ATO by phone are.

Digital services for tax professionals - masterclass education series

Assistant Commissioner Kerry O'Loughlin and Director Ben Lurje provided members with an overview on a concept to develop a masterclass education series to support tax professionals to optimise their use of ATO digital services.

The ATO recognise that there have been significant digital changes for tax professionals over the last few years with the move to the Practitioner Lodgment Service (PLS) and Online Services for Agents (OSFA). Many tax professionals have a solid, foundational understanding of these digital services but may not be optimising the full functionality of these services.

The masterclass education series aims to:

- Build the competency and confidence of tax professionals in using digital services
- Potentially improve productivity within the practice
- Improve online security controls and practices.

The ATO will partner with the tax profession to co-design the content, prioritise the topics and determine the appropriate delivery channels. The ATO is also looking into the possibility of the education counting towards continuing professional education (CPE).

Members supported the initiative and the benefits that it could deliver. Members were also open to the inclusion of an optional assessment component for relevant topics.

Members highlighted that tax professionals are currently under an extreme amount of pressure, so the availability of content that can be accessed 'on demand' is a key design consideration.

Members suggested a social media campaign highlighting the top 10 tips for using ATO digital services. These could be a series of short tips with one tip per post that professionals can share.

Further discussion on this masterclass concept will continue at the next meeting of the Tax Profession Digital Implementation Group.

Cash flow boost stimulus measure

Assistant Commissioner Kasey Macfarlane provided an update on cash flow boost payments.

The ATO has worked to clear the backlog of escalated cases. There are a small amount of cases remaining that require further review due to:

- backdated PAYGW registrations
- ABN registrations post 12 March that have been backdated
- no evidence of business activity for the entity from 1 July 2018
- not satisfying the aggregated turnover test.

Some of these cases may have received misleading information as to their eligibility. Guidance information for ATO contact centre staff has been updated to enable them to better respond to client queries regarding their eligibility.

Tax practitioners are advised to refer clients to the [Eligibility companion guide for cash flow boost](#) to review their eligibility and for reasons that payments may not have been applied.

Clients who received the first cash flow boost payment should expect to receive the second payment within 3-14 days of lodgment of their June activity statement.

JobKeeper program

Director Michael Karavas provided an update on JobKeeper payments. The next round of declarations will commence this week for the June fortnight. As there have not been any changes this month the ATO anticipate that this round will progress smoothly.

Communications have issued to prompt employers that have not completed the three required steps for payment and remind employers to complete May declarations before the end of the month to avoid having to contact the ATO to have payments processed manually.

Changes for childcare providers were announced recently and the ATO are expecting updated rules to be issued within the next week for a start date of 20 July. The ATO are contacting impacted businesses to clarify the changes and advise what they need to do.

Upcoming system updates include:

- The landing page is expected to be updated in late July to provide employers with a receipt number.
- There will be screen updates at the beginning of September to allow for the three fortnights in August.

These changes will be communicated to tax practitioners and employers prior to being deployed.

Tips and links

- We have included an [overview of key changes](#) and new measures on our website, to assist you when completing your clients' tax returns, including COVID-19 measures and support; income, deductions and concessions; and Single Touch Payroll processing.
- Legislation has been enacted changing the [taxation treatment of distributions of net income from testamentary trusts to minors](#). The new law applies to property acquired or transferred from 1 July 2019.
- We are developing [advice and guidance](#) on the following income tax issues.

Next meeting date

The next Tax Practitioner Stewardship Group Tax time 2020 meeting will be held on Tuesday 7 July from 9:45am – 11:15am (AEST).

If there are any concerns in relation to any aspect of Tax Time 2020 meetings, please contact us via TPSG@ato.gov.au.

Tax Time update – 23 June 2020

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/TPSG---tax-time-key-messages/Tax-Time-update---23-June-2020/>
- Last modified: 02 Jul 2020
- QC 63091

Lodgment stats as of 28 June 2020

Lodgments – type and channel	Overall – year to date total returns received as at 28 June 2020	Current year returns as at 28 June 2020	Comparison – current year returns received as at 29 June 2019
Individual – electronic	15,790,365	13,844,314	13,341,143
Non-Individual – electronic	2,920,548	2,411,396	2,488,408
Self-Preparer – myTax	5,136,474	4,545,231	3,878,347
Tax Practitioner – Practitioner Lodgment Service (PLS)	13,209,244	11,611,448	11,851,426

Please note: Paper statistics have been removed from this table as lodgments via paper may not be represented in statistics during the 56-day processing service standard.

Individuals and Intermediaries

Deputy Commissioner Hoa Wood provided an update on current Individuals and Intermediaries business line activities.

The current focus is on preparing for Tax Time 2020 and developing support materials to assist taxpayers and tax professionals:

- The ATO is developing a Tax Time Tool Kit. This tool kit provides useful documents to guide tax professionals on topical issues and assist conversations with their clients.
- Assistant Commissioners Trent Jakubowski and Sylvia Gallagher have starred in a series of help videos being shared through our social media channels

including LinkedIn. These focus on topical issues for this tax time.

- The Tax Help program has had to take a different approach this tax time by looking at alternate ways to reach people virtually.

We are continuing to work with Professional Associations on how to closely work together on tax time messaging.

Service Delivery

Deputy Commissioner Grant Brodie provided an update on Service Delivery activities. Recent call volumes are still up from the same time last year, although they have reduced slightly in recent weeks. The average length of calls are approximately 30 % longer than last year. The nature of calls still focuses on stimulus measures and linking codes.

Contact centre staffing levels have been increased in readiness for Tax Time 2020. ATO contact centre extended hours of service from next week will be: 8:00am – 8:00pm Monday to Friday, and 10:00am – 4:00pm Saturday and Sunday.

The group discussed the service times for the tax agent phone line. There were mixed views on opening the tax agent phone line outside of normal business hours. An extended hours service for tax agents, aligned with the general phone lines, will be trialled in July.

Assistant Commissioner Frances McMorro provided an update on the commencement of the Tax Time 2020 processing safety nets in place. These safety nets ensure that any 2019–20 forms lodged don't process automatically. This allows for checking and verification activities to be performed on these forms and ensure that system updates are operating as expected. To date, processing appears to be progressing well with forms being processed correctly. Members will be updated on the anticipated date that these safety nets will be removed at a future meeting.

Small Business

Deputy Commissioner Deborah Jenkins provided an update on Small Business activities.

The extension of Instant asset write-off to 31 December 2020 received royal assent on 19 June 2020. ATO communications have encouraged businesses to seek advice from their accountant or tax professional prior to making purchases. The ATO have been working closely with motor vehicle distributors in particular to share this messaging as an area of confusion is around the application of the Instant asset write-off to motor vehicles.

The rules around the ordering and purchases of tools and equipment remain the same as previous years, specifically the need to be installed and ready for use. Members are encouraged to provide feedback and insights on this topic.

The change of date will allow for entities with substitute accounting periods to take advantage of the incentive.

The ATO are working to help businesses understand the tax treatment of various grants related to both bushfires and COVID-19. There are different terms and conditions around these grants, and this is causing confusion in the community about the appropriate tax treatment. Further information will be shared with members when available.

Systems update and maintenance

Deputy Commissioner Alex Adams provided an update on systems updates and maintenance. The ATO has been working to ensure the capacity of ATO systems are sufficient to cope with the demands of tax time, in addition to the ongoing stimulus measure requirements.

An unknown this year is trying to predict community behaviour, in terms of how many people will commence lodging from 1 July. ATO systems and platforms need to ensure they are able to cater for that demand in addition to having capacity for the on-going activities for JobKeeper and early release of Superannuation. Processes are in place to respond to unexpected issues should they arise.

A solution has also been implemented that provides the option to manage online user throughput during high capacity periods. This solution can be used for ATO Online for Individuals, Online services for agents and Business Portal. If the solution is activated to manage capacity, it means that some users will be presented with a user-friendly message communicating that high volumes are being experienced and to try again later.

Communications

Assistant Commissioner Sally Bektas provided an update on upcoming communication activities. This year the ATO's communications focus is on supporting Australians during challenging times and providing support to tax professionals and their clients during tax time.

In preparation for Tax Time 2020 there are a number of activities under way through various channels including:

- the video series starring Assistant Commissioners Trent Jakubowski and Sylvia Gallagher
- the *Tax professionals newsletter*
- ensuring that tax professionals are receiving regular email updates.

The ATO will be using all channels to make sure that information is available and that taxpayers understand where to find the information they need to understand and meet their obligations. The next *Tax professionals newsletter* will provide more detail about how tax professionals can self-serve at tax time and what they will need to call the ATO for.

A media release on the ATO's COVID-19 compliance approach for early release of superannuation, cash flow boost and JobKeeper issued today. It outlines what the ATO is seeing and looking more closely at and advises taxpayers that if they have made a genuine mistake the ATO will work with them to correct it. However, the

ATO will be reaching out to those who have attempted to defraud the system and taking the appropriate action.

Topics covered in the *Tax professionals newsletter* include:

- business changes and Taxable payment annual report (TPAR)
- Lodgment program performance summaries
- end-of-year finalisation through Single Touch Payroll
- myGovID and RAM updates and changes to our platforms
- work-related expenses, which are discussed in more detail in the recent [Tax inVoice podcast](#).

myGov messages will be issuing to taxpayers regarding how to access their income statements, as well as enforced messaging around waiting for income statements to become available before lodging.

Work is being done to finalise the full suite of Tax Time Toolkits and occupation guides to be ready by 1 July 2020. This includes new occupation guides for the agricultural sector, lawyers, bus drivers, factory workers, paramedics, performing arts, firefighters and call centre operators.

The Tax Time Toolkits for aviation, construction, education, government, real estate, retail, transport, rental properties and small business will also be available. The translation of relevant occupation posters across five different languages will also take place, so to assist those who have clients who are culturally or linguistically diverse. This information is available on the ATO website.

Another focus for the ATO at tax time is around scams and security. The ATO are making sure awareness messaging reaches a broad range of people and will be engaging to share information through every channel, not just for organisations but for individuals as well.

Digital services

Assistant Commissioner Kerry O’Loughlin provided an update on Digital services.

The Quarter 2 (Tax Time 2020) release over the weekend of 20–21 June was successful, and additional functionality was implemented in the deployment.

myGovID

‘Verify my visa’ expands the available identity documents that can be used to obtain a standard myGovID and importantly, it may mean users with an existing Basic authorisation could be eligible to upgrade to a Standard myGovID, giving them the potential to have full access to Online Services for Agents (OSfA), dependent on the permissions set by the practice.

As part of the weekend release the ATO provided a detailed explanation of the changes that were being delivered, along with the audit trail material to key client groups prior to the release. Screen shot examples of the changes (e.g. what myGovID looks like with the ‘visa’ as an option) were not shared but this may be

considered for future releases.

As part of the upgrade over the weekend, the new version of myGovID was published to the Apple and Google app stores during the outage window as per standard practice.

Both Apple and Google then need to review the updated app, then publish the app so that users can receive the upgrade. This usually occurs within the outage window and has done so for the past 12 months.

Unfortunately there was a delay with the Apple and Google app review process and the subsequent availability of myGovID in the app stores.

This meant that some users who tried to access the app during this period would have received a 'looping' issue as the new app was not published and the old app was no longer available. This issue only impacted users during the time of the app store delay, and there is no ongoing incident in relation to this.

Some users were required to either delete the app and reinstall, and/or in rare circumstances need to re-prove their identity as a result of issues with the app. Having the app 'auto' install new updates does assist in avoiding these issues, though this is the client's choice as it is a setting in their phone – the myGovID website will be updated to advise of this option.

Access Manager – Access Manager history report

This report shows details on when staff have accessed OSfA. This report was introduced in response to concerns from tax professionals around limited visibility of staff accessing ATO systems out of office/out of hours.

Relationship Authorisation Manager (RAM) new features

Three new features were introduced following the rollout:

- A feature that notifies existing associates when a new associate links the business.
- Prevention of an individual from having concurrent authorisations for the same business; this simplifies authorisations in RAM.
- The ability to download a detailed list of authorisations, to assist business in managing their authorisations.

The feature to 'Prevent an individual from having concurrent authorisations for the same business' relates to an issue where a single person in a business may be listed as the 'principle authority', and the 'administrator', and in some cases as a 'basic user'.

The hierarchy of RAM means the highest authorisation prevails (i.e. the principle authority authorisation) so other relationships are redundant as such. We delivered this feature to simplify the authorisation process for users, meaning you can only have one authorisation per ABN.

As tax agents and BAS agents are not added in RAM, these relationships remain

with the realm of ICP (add client etc).

Machine to machine credential

A new feature to notify the machine credential administrator when a credential custodian is removed was deployed as part of Quarter 2.

Digital service providers (DSP) update

Overall DSP readiness is at 70%, which is similar to last year's trend.

- Income tax return is at 67% readiness and on track.
- Partnership tax return is at 78% and on track.
- All major tax professional software providers have confirmed they are 'Tax Time 2020 ready'.

Online Services for Agents (OSfA)

Quarter 2 business deployment verification (BDV) was successful and there were no changes or impacts to OSfA functionality as part of the Quarter 2 roll out.

OSfA usage is driven primarily by BAS due dates, and this year by COVID-19 stimulus measures. Tax time is not a major driver of OSfA usage. For the week 15–21 June there were 129,000 logins to OSfA, which is consistent with the week prior. Usage will be monitored on a weekly basis.

Practitioner lodgment service (PLS)

- The income tax return was successfully deployed.
- For the week 15–21 June, 400,992 transactions were received.

Pre-fill data

Pre-fill service is being deployed and is in the final stages of testing. Data is being loaded as it becomes available. More details on numbers of records/availability of data will be provided in future updates. However, it is looking like this will be available as the same time last year.

Can we provide practitioners with update if we expect prefill to be late?

Most data is not statutorily required until 31 October so is not overdue or late (in legal sense) until after this date. As mentioned at the meeting the ATO provides a pre-fill availability page on [ato.gov](https://ato.gov.au) to advise clients, tax agents and the data reporters as to when data is available in prefill. This is updated daily.

There are variances year on year around the date data is reported depending on an individual reporter's circumstances and factors such as what day 1 July falls on. Reporters are aware the longer it takes them to get the data in the more likely they'll field queries from their customers. For Tax Time 2020 we are not expecting data receipt to be significantly different to last year.

Why can't we pre-fill Job Keeper amounts for sole traders?

JobKeeper was announced late in the tax time readiness process which limited the opportunity to make system changes

JobKeeper information for employees can be reported via prefill as it uses existing reporting arrangements for employers reporting salary and wage to the ATO,

Sole traders don't usually have this type of income, so it is not part of the current third-party data reporting process

As JobKeeper data for sole traders is not reported to us as it is for employees, significant systems change would have been required and unlikely to be achieved within the available timeframe.

Self-preparers

The Tax Time 2020 release was successfully deployed over the weekend and post deployment verification testing is currently underway. Tax time communication emails around claiming expenses have begun to issue.

Debt and lodgment

Deputy Commissioner Vivek Chaudhary provided an update on debt and lodgment activities. There are still a substantial amount of lodgments and payments being received for 2019 obligations.

The ATO will look to start engaging with clients who haven't paid or sought any assistance for outstanding obligations with a gradual approach, recognising and responding to clients' needs and trying to pre-empt as much as possible. An update will be provided to members at a future meeting as details are finalised as to what this approach will look like.

Tax professionals are urged to encourage their clients to keep the ATO up to date if they are having trouble meeting their obligations.

Post COVID-19 education and support strategy for small business

Assistant Commissioner Dan Ralph and Senior Director Marcus Chew provided an update on the ATO's proposed approach to supporting small businesses impacted by COVID-19 and sought member feedback the approach.

The ATO is developing approaches to assist small businesses who may have endured challenging circumstances and help them meet their tax obligations as easy as possible. This is based on research advising that small business is looking for more tailored information to suit their circumstances that they can access information quickly and easily.

Targeted and tailored messages will be provided to clients in addition to broader Tax Time 2020 messages. Messages will be communicated through emails and SMS encouraging small businesses to visit our support content on ato.gov.au or to contact their registered tax professional.

The website content will provide information about how we are looking to support small business, and link to a range of existing topics on ato.gov.au. The intent is to guide small business to the information and enable them to educate themselves.

The focus will be to provide this assistance to specific industries, particularly retail and hospitality, sport and recreation, some professional services, building and construction and ride sourcing as well as clients more broadly who may have been facing challenges recently.

Feedback and questions from members on the approach included:

- Is there a new initiative, product or solution? Is this new information, or are you highlighting existing information product?
- Members queried where the demand for this information comes from, as most small businesses use a tax professional. The ATO recognise that some small businesses are looking for more help because they are struggling and may not be in a position to use the services of an agent this year.
- Members queried whether the approach states that small businesses should seek advice from their tax professional to clarify or expand on information provided on the ATO website.

The group advised that tax professionals would want to a copy of the emails and the SMS that were being issued to their clients, to enable them to be prepared should the client contact them.

JobKeeper stimulus measure

Deputy Commissioner James O'Halloran provided an update on the JobKeeper stimulus measure. The ATO has released a media statement regarding COVID-19 fraud measures, talking about what is being seen and heard from the community and areas of ATO concern.

There have been concerns raised by tax professionals regarding the additional workload attributed to not being able to amend the employee numbers in JobKeeper reporting. The ATO advised that the functionality for amendments won't be available for the foreseeable future, however the ATO acknowledges the additional work that this creates. There is a clear view from the tax professional community that finding a solution for this is important, and members highlighted the need to share better information with tax professionals about this issue.

The ATO is aware and acknowledges that there are applicants still waiting for JobKeeper payments. Reasons for the delay include the eligibility of business participants and integrity issues affecting a small but significant number of cases. The ATO is contacting applicants who have shown no sign of life or recent engagement.

The ATO may contact applicants who received the first payment but may be required to provide additional information prior to further payments being made.

A small number of employees have been listed on multiple applications. The ATO understands and appreciate that this may be no fault of the employer and will work

with employers to resolve this issue.

Cash flow boost stimulus measure

Assistant Commissioner Kasey Macfarlane provided an update on cash flow boost payment reversals and the repayment process.

On 19 June 2020 the legislative amendment in relation to cash flow boost received royal assent confirming that the amount for alienated personal services income (PSI) subject to withholding contributes towards the calculation of cash flow boost. The ATO is in the process of updating web content to reflect this.

There were a small number of clients that came forward prior to the amendment to advise that they received the cash flow boost amount in relation to that PSI that they weren't entitled to and paid the money back to the ATO. The ATO have identified clients in this category and are in the process of repaying the original cash flow boost payment amount now that legislation has received Royal Assent.

Work is progressing to contact businesses waiting for cash flow boost payments where the ATO require confirmation of eligibility. There are still a small number waiting due to integrity issues that need to be investigated further. Instances where payments may be delayed may be due to backdated pay as you go withholding (PAYGW) roles and ABN registrations prior to 12 March 2020. There may be some cases where documentation can be provided to explain the change.

There have been cases where businesses have lodged a revision to March activity statements, where the original activity statement has 0 at the W1 and W2 labels, and now with a revised amount showing. In some cases, this may be an error. Given the number of revisions the ATO has received, as well as the number of those that have no prior history to salary of wages this is a potential integrity concern requiring further investigating.

The ATO has received questions regarding cash flow boost amounts received incorrectly and how those amounts can be reversed or repaid. The most effective way to do this is to call the ATO contact centre and provide client details. Contact centre staff have the tools and processes in place to action this. Using channels other than the above mentioned for requests may cause delays in processing the reversal.

Tips and links

- [Updated information](#) is available on our website on the terms of use for employers using the Small Business Superannuation Clearing House (SBSCH).
- If you are selling or buying new residential premises or potential residential land, you need to comply with the [GST at settlement process](#).
- The ATO is aware that residential rental property owners may be concerned about how COVID-19, floods, or bushfires have reduced their income. Information is available on [what you need to know this tax time](#).
- We offer a variety of ways you can keep up to date with information that affects

you and your clients. See [news alerts and services](#).

Next meeting date

The next Tax Practitioner Stewardship Group Tax time 2020 meeting will be held on Tuesday 30 June from 9:45am–11:45am (AEST).

If there are any concerns in relation to any aspect of Tax Time 2020 meetings, please contact us via TPSG@ato.gov.au

Tax Time 2020 videos for the tax profession

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-Time-2020/Tax-Time-2020-videos-for-the-tax-profession/>
- Last modified: 03 Aug 2020
- QC 63320

Join Assistant Commissioners Sylvia Gallagher and Trent Jakubowski for a series of short videos highlighting key information for tax professionals for Tax Time 2020.

Quick tips for the tax profession

Media: Quick tips for the tax profession

<http://tv.ato.gov.au/ato-tv/media?v=bi9or7on5p8csr> [↗] (Duration: 0:53)

Download transcript: [Quick tips for the tax profession - Tax Time 2020 \(RTF, 39.7KB\)](#) 

Work related expenses

Media: Work related expenses


<http://tv.ato.gov.au/ato-tv/media?v=bd1bdiun55adr9> [↗] (Duration: 1:27)

Download transcript: [Work-related expenses - Tax time 2020 \(RTF, 1.73KB\)](#) 

Upcoming livestream & different income types

Media: Upcoming livestream & Different income types

<http://tv.ato.gov.au/ato-tv/media?v=bd1bdiunhng6p5> [↗] (Duration: 1:02)

Download transcript: [Upcoming livestream & Different income types - Tax time 2020 \(RTF, 1.39KB\)](#) 

End-of-year finalisation through STP

Media: End of year finalisation through STP


<http://tv.ato.gov.au/ato-tv/media?v=bd1bdiunhjh44y> (Duration: 1:17)

Download transcript: [End-of-year finalisation \(RTF, 41.6KB\)](#) 

Deductions, tax time toolkits, donations

Media: Deductions, tax time toolkits, donations

<http://tv.ato.gov.au/ato-tv/media?v=bd1bdiunhm47zg> (Duration: 1:01)

Download transcript: [Deductions, tax time toolkits, donations - Tax time 2020 \(RTF, 1.37KB\)](#) 

Reconstructing records & relief payments

Media: Reconstructing records & relief payments

<http://tv.ato.gov.au/ato-tv/media?v=bd1bdiunh1qr48> (Duration: 1:22)

Download transcript: [Reconstructing records & relief payments \(RTF, 39.1KB\)](#) 

'Tax ready' key dates & payment plans

Media: 'Tax ready' key dates & payment plans

<http://tv.ato.gov.au/ato-tv/media?v=bi9or7onho8ubw> (Duration: 1:09)

Download transcript: ['Tax ready' key dates & payment plans \(RTF, 39KB\)](#) 

Progress of return & Online services for agents: Tax time

Media: Progress of return & Online services for agents

<http://tv.ato.gov.au/ato-tv/media?v=bi9or7onhtxxbu> (Duration: 1:24)

Download transcript: [Progress of return & Online services for agents: Tax time \(RTF, 1.72KB\)](#) 

Rental deductions & instant asset write-off

Media: Rental deductions & instant asset write-off

<http://tv.ato.gov.au/ato-tv/media?v=bi9or7onhtxxg> (Duration: 1:22)

Lodgment program framework

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Lodgment-program-framework/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34613

Registered tax agents and BAS agents (registered agents) play an important role in helping taxpayers meet their tax and superannuation lodgment obligations. To help you manage this workload, we provide a lodgment program that accommodates progressive document lodgment over a 12-month period.

The lodgment program framework promotes a level playing field among registered agents by benchmarking lodgment performance.

The framework recognises agents who:

- have good practice management
- lodge electronically
- are consistently on time.

How to meet the performance requirement

To help you meet the performance requirements, we recommend that you:

- contact us as early as possible to discuss your circumstances, if you are [experiencing difficulty](#) in meeting lodgment due dates
- keep your client list up to date, as all clients with a lodgment obligation who are linked to your registered agent number are included in the lodgment performance calculation
- notify us early if your client does not have a requirement to lodge a return in any given year, as the performance calculation is based on clients with an expected lodgment.

If you experience short-term difficulties, we can help you meet the requirements and achieve the lodgment performance benchmark.

Find out about:

- [Requirements and how they affect you](#)
- [85% on-time lodgment requirement](#)
- [How the framework was developed](#)
- [Electronic lodgment](#)
- [If you do not meet the performance requirement](#)

Requirements and how they affect you

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Lodgment-program-framework/Requirements-and-how-they-affect-you/>
- Last modified: 19 Mar 2021
- QC 34614

The lodgment program framework promotes a level playing field among registered agents by benchmarking lodgment performance.

The framework recognises agents who have good practice management, lodge electronically and are consistently on time.

On this page:

- [Who and what will be affected](#)
- [Requirements for income tax](#)
- [Requirements for FBT](#)
- [Requirements for new registrants](#)
- [Effect on due dates and deferrals](#)

Who and what will be affected

The framework involves registered tax agents and the lodgment of:

- tax returns (for all entity types)
- fringe benefits tax (FBT) returns.

Requirements for income tax

To receive the income tax due dates provided by the lodgment program, as a registered tax agent you must:

- lodge returns electronically (unless there are exceptional circumstances)
- lodge 85% or more of your clients' current year returns on time.

'On time' means returns are received by the lodgment program due date or, when a deferral is granted, the deferred due date.

Requirements for FBT

You must lodge FBT returns via the practitioner lodgment service (PLS) to receive the FBT lodgment program due date of 25 June.

Payment due dates for any FBT returns are:

- 25 June, if the return is lodged via PLS
- 21 May, if the return is lodged by paper.

You are encouraged to lodge 85% or more of your clients' current year returns on time. 'On time' means returns are received by the lodgment program due date or,

when a deferral is granted, the deferred due date.

Requirements for new registrants

The lodgment program framework requirements apply to all newly registered tax agents.

Effect on due dates and deferrals

The lodgment program framework does not affect the lodgment program due dates and concessions.

If we review existing lodgment program concessional due dates in the future, we will consult with registered agents through the [Lodgment Working Group](#) and professional association representatives. If anything changes, we will provide information to the broader tax practitioner community before the changes come into effect.

Lodgment deferrals continue to be available under the lodgment program to help you manage unexpected or unforeseen circumstances that affect your ability to lodge by the due date. If we have granted a lodgment deferral, we will use the deferred due date to measure on-time lodgment performance.

We monitor deferral requests and will contact registered agents who have a high percentage of deferral requests compared to their total client list to ensure they are being used correctly.

See also:

- [Lodgment program deferrals](#)

85% on-time lodgment requirement

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Lodgment-program-framework/85--on-time-lodgment-requirement/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34616

You are required to lodge 85% or more of your clients' current year returns by the lodgment program due date, or by the deferred due date if we grant a deferral.

Find out about:

- [How we calculate your lodgment performance](#)
- [Lodgment performance summaries](#)
- [What you can do to meet the performance requirement](#)

How we calculate your lodgment performance

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Lodgment-program-framework/85--on-time-lodgment-requirement/How-we-calculate-your-lodgment-performance/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34617

On-time lodgment performance is calculated separately for income tax and fringe benefits tax. Your income tax on-time lodgment performance will not be added to your fringe benefits tax on-time lodgment performance. The calculations are separate and are done at different times of the year.

Each is calculated annually using current year:

- income tax lodgments
- fringe benefits tax lodgments.

We calculate your performance percentage based on the number of current year returns lodged by the due date, divided by the total number of clients attached to your registered agent number. We use the document receipt date when calculating your lodgment performance. Therefore, your performance will not be affected if we hold your clients' returns for review.

Income tax

Add all current year tax returns that you lodge by the due date:

- current year tax returns lodged by the document due date
- current year tax returns lodged by the deferred due date
- current year return not necessary and further return not necessary advices (also known as non lodgment advices).

Divide this figure by the total number of income tax clients attached to your registered agent number.

INCOME TAX



*On-time means lodgments received by lodgment program due date or deferred due date

Fringe benefits tax

Add all current year fringe benefits tax returns that you lodge by the due date – current year:

- fringe benefits tax returns lodged by the document due date

- fringe benefits tax returns lodged by the deferred due date
- notice of non-lodgment advices
- registration cancellation advices.

Divide this figure by the total number of fringe benefits tax clients attached to your registered agent number.



Lodgment performance summaries

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Lodgment-program-framework/85--on-time-lodgment-requirement/Lodgment-performance-summaries/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34618

To help you monitor your on-time lodgment performance, we will send you a lodgment program performance summary.

We email your annual lodgment program performance summary each July, showing the number of tax returns you have lodged on time during the year and how your performance compares to the previous year.

In addition, if you have FBT clients attached to your registered agent number on 21 May, you will also receive an on-time lodgment performance summary showing the number of *Fringe benefits tax returns* you lodged on time.

Make sure your contact details, including your email address, are up to date to ensure you receive your lodgment performance summaries.

You can track your on-time lodgment performance online through Online Services for agents. You can also access the Lodgment Performance report through the practitioner lodgment service (PLS). This report will be available on demand.

When calculating lodgment performance, we will only take into account current year lodgments. For example, to calculate a tax agent's on-time lodgment performance for tax returns under the *Lodgment Program 2020–21*, we measure only 2020 tax returns.

We'll take into account any widespread ATO system issues that occur on a key lodgment due date that may affect your lodgment program performance.

Next steps:

- To discuss specific questions about how your performance was calculated, phone us on 13 72 86 Fast Key Code 1 3 2, between 8.00am and 6.00pm AEST, Monday to Friday.

See also:

- [Online services for agents](#)

What you can do to meet the performance requirement

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Lodgment-program-framework/85--on-time-lodgment-requirement/What-you-can-do-to-meet-the-performance-requirement/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34531

To help you meet the 85% on-time lodgment requirement, you should review and update your client list. You should also check whether new clients who were previously self-preparers have outstanding prior year tax returns.

On this page:

- [Update your client list](#)
- [Lodge overdue prior year tax returns](#)
- [Deferrals for new or re-engaged clients with overdue returns](#)
- [Notify us if a return is not necessary](#)

Update your client list

All clients who are attached to your registered agent number will be included in your 85% on-time lodgment performance calculation. Updating your client list regularly will help your practice to manage client due dates and ensure that clients who no longer use your services are not included in your lodgment program performance calculation.

You can obtain a list of your clients using Online services for agents or the practitioner lodgment service (PLS). The client lists produced by these online services may provide different views of your clients' details.

Download and check your relevant client list using:

- Online services for agents – [Advanced search](#)
- [Practitioner lodgment service – Reports](#)

If you save your client list to Microsoft Excel, you can use the filter and sort functions to easily identify the clients you want to remove.

You can delete clients from your client list at any time using our online systems or your practice software.

Before removing a client, update their contact details with their most recent address and phone number. This ensures that you no longer receive communications on their behalf (if your practice was listed as the point of contact).

It also helps us to contact your former client if they have any outstanding tax and super obligations and ensure fairness for taxpayers who do the right thing.

Next steps:

- To discuss any specific concerns phone us on 13 72 86 Fast Key Code 1 3 2, between 8.00am and 6.00pm AEST, Monday to Friday.

Lodge overdue prior year tax returns

We only look at the current year lodgment to determine the on-time performance percentage. Prior years do not form part of the calculation. For example, to calculate your on-time lodgment performance for the *Lodgment program 2020–21*, we will only measure 2019–20 income year tax returns.

Example

Registered Agent A has a client with overdue prior year tax returns for the 2012–13 and 2014–15 financial years.

When calculating Agent A's on-time lodgment program performance percentage for the Lodgment program 2019–20, the client's:

- 2019 tax return will be included
- overdue 2013 tax return and 2015 tax return will not be included.

If you accept a new client for income tax purposes after 31 October, you should check the lodgment due date for the client on your client list. If the new client was previously a self-preparer, they will not be covered by your lodgment program and may need to have lodged by an earlier due date.

You can check if your client has outstanding prior year tax returns using our online services or your practice software.

See also:

- Online services for agents – [For action](#)

Deferrals for new or re-engaged clients with overdue returns

If you engage new clients (or previous clients) with overdue prior year income tax returns, your on-time lodgment performance will only be affected if you lodge the current year's return after the due date or deferred due date.

You can request a lodgment deferral for the current year income tax return due on 31 October and suspension of compliance action on prior year returns, to give you time to prepare and lodge the overdue tax returns.

Next steps:

- [Deferrals for new or re-engaged clients with overdue returns](#)
- [Lodgment deferrals – for registered agents](#)

Notify us if a return is not necessary

Clients attached to your registered agent number with an expected lodgment will be included in your on-time lodgment performance calculation.

A return not necessary (RNN) or further return not necessary (FRNN), also known as a non-lodgment advice, lets us know that your client has no obligation to lodge a tax return for either a specified year, or in the future. You can lodge a RNN or FRNN for your client through Online services for agents or the Practitioner lodgment service.

A RNN advises us that a tax return is not required for one financial year only. If you submit a RNN for your client, their tax return will be expected to be lodged in future years. You should notify us of a RNN before the expected lodgment date.

If you notify us of a FRNN, a lodgment will not be expected for your client this year or in the future. However, lodging a FRNN or notifying us that a return is a final return for your client does not remove the client link in ATO systems.

You can remove former clients from your client list using your practice software or our online services.

If you are submitting an FBT non-lodgment advice form, it may take us up to 28 days to process your request. Submit your form as early as possible using Practice mail to ensure your performance measurement is accurate.

See also:

- [Notify us if lodgment is not required](#)
- [Notifying us when further returns are not necessary](#)
- [FBT – non-lodgment advice for registered agents](#)

How the framework was developed

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Lodgment-program-framework/How-the-framework-was-developed/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2019
- QC 34615

The lodgment program framework was developed in consultation with tax professionals and tax professional associations through 2011 and 2012 and introduced in 2013.

The framework means that to access program benefits, you will need to lodge your clients' returns electronically, and lodge 85% or more of your clients' current year returns on time. The benchmark of 85% was developed in consultation with the Lodgment Working Group and professional association representatives. This was considered a reasonable benchmark for registered agents to meet.

Lodgment Working Group

The Lodgment working group is a special purpose working group made up of representatives of professional associations, practitioners and the ATO. The group meets only when there is a relevant issue the ATO wishes to consult on, or that the profession raises in regard to the Lodgment Program.

Electronic lodgment

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Lodgment-program-framework/Electronic-lodgment/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34532

You need to lodge all of your clients' tax returns electronically to receive lodgment program due dates.

The practitioner lodgment service (PLS) is now the only electronic lodgment channel for lodging your clients' tax and annual returns:

- individual and trust tax returns
- partnership tax return
- self-managed superannuation fund annual return and the fund income tax return
- company tax return
- fringe benefits tax return.

If you lodge by paper

The due dates available under the lodgment program only apply to a tax return that is lodged electronically. If you lodge a paper tax return after the document's statutory due date, we may apply a late lodgment penalty.

Unless you are facing exceptional circumstances, you are required to lodge electronically. If your practice is experiencing exceptional or unforeseen circumstances that prevent you from lodging by the due date, you can apply for a lodgment deferral.

Next steps:

- If you experience exceptional circumstances, or wish to discuss options for lodging electronically, contact us on 13 72 86 Fast Key Code 1 3 2, between 8.00am and 6.00pm AEST, Monday to Friday.

Electronic lodgment exclusions

We recognise there are circumstances where electronic lodgment is not possible due to timing or the availability of software. We will exclude lodgments from the electronic requirement in circumstances where either:

- we have not made a tax return available in electronic format
- the availability of software is not aligned with a key due date.

Forms excluded from electronic lodgment

For 2020–21, the following types of tax returns are excluded from the electronic lodgment requirement under the lodgment program framework:

- trust tax returns for large managed investment trusts or public unit trusts
- substituted accounting period (SAP) tax returns where the current year software would not be available by the time of lodgment due date, which affect the following taxpayers
 - individuals, partnerships and trusts with SAP codes
 - A – Early December balancer
 - B – January balancer
 - C – February balancer
 - D – March balancer
 - companies and super funds (excluding NFSA) with SAP code A – Early December balancer.

See also:

- [Substituted accounting periods](#) – for SAP return codes and due dates.

If you do not meet the performance requirement

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Lodgment-program-framework/If-you-do-not-meet-the-performance-requirement/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34533

If your yearly averaged performance percentage does not meet the 85% benchmark, we may contact you to discuss options to improve your performance percentage.

We want to give you every opportunity for open dialogue so we can help you to improve your on-time performance.

We will apply specific support strategies and take a differentiated approach to improve lodgment performance across the tax profession. This could include guiding your lodgment program due dates for the following year.

On this page:

- [Income tax](#)
- [Deferrals for short-term or unforeseen circumstances](#)
- [Longer term and exceptional circumstances](#)
- [COVID-19 support](#)

Income tax

Before applying a support strategy, we will contact you to discuss individual circumstances that may be affecting your lodgment performance. We will take into account your individual performance and compliance history.

Support strategies are designed to encourage continuous improvement and support agents in taking the necessary steps to improve their performance and better represent and influence their clients' behaviour.

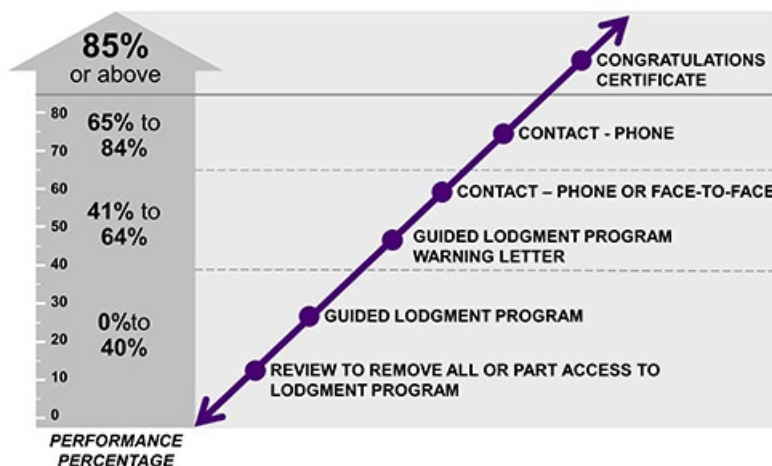
Table: Lodgment performance and our approach

Yearly average performance percentage levels	Approach
85% or above	No support strategy – you are meeting the benchmark and will receive a certificate to confirm
75–84%	No support strategy – you are close to achieving the benchmark

	and can take steps to improve your performance in the future
65–74%	You need to take steps to improve your performance for next year. We may contact you to discuss ways we can help you to achieve the benchmark in the future
41–64%	We will contact you by phone or face to face to discuss the circumstances affecting you and steps you can take to improve – we will continue to monitor your progress
40% or below	We will contact you by phone or face to face to discuss your low performance – you may be entered into a guided lodgment program, which includes a series of progressive lodgment milestones throughout the year. We will review your access to the lodgment program and may remove all or part of your access. We may also write directly to your clients seeking lodgment

We may apply support strategies where you do not meet the 85% on-time lodgment benchmark. If a support strategy is applied, you should work towards improving your lodgment performance by the following year. If your performance does not improve, we will progressively apply increasingly stringent support strategies, as detailed in the following diagram.

Cascading strategies for agents by performance



In past years we have engaged with a significant number of practitioners who were not meeting the performance benchmark. In the 2020–21 financial year, we will continue to focus on agents performing below 65%.

Agents with continued poor lodgment performance, and a poor compliance history, may be at risk of being placed on a guided program. If there is no improvement they may risk losing access to concessional due dates under the lodgment program.

Deferrals for short-term or unforeseen circumstances

Lodgment deferrals will continue to be available under the lodgment program to help you manage short-term difficulties that affect your ability to lodge by the due date.

We will use the deferred due date to measure your on-time lodgment performance.

We monitor how deferrals are used to ensure a level playing field. We may contact your practice if we believe deferrals are being used as a business tool for managing lodgment program workloads.

Longer term and exceptional circumstances

If you're experiencing longer term exceptional circumstances, you can ask for assistance to help you get back on track. We will work with you and take into account your individual circumstance, such as:

- serious illness within your practice or family
- sudden and unexpected staff changes
- natural or other disasters.

See also:

- [Help with your lodgment program](#)

COVID-19 support

We acknowledge that your current focus is on guiding your clients to understand and access relevant COVID-19 support measures at this time. Additionally, the devastating bushfires that affected large parts of Australia during 2019–20 may have significantly disrupted your lodgment program for this year.

You will not be adversely affected if you do not meet the 85% lodgment program performance benchmark in the 2019–20 lodgment program year. We will be working pragmatically and flexibly to ensure that we provide you with the right support.

See also:

- [Support for tax professionals](#)

Tax agent lodgment program 2020–21

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34535

The *Lodgment program 2020–21* details the lodgment due dates you receive as a registered agent during the 12 months ending 30 June 2021.

Our expectations for agents to access lodgment program due dates are defined under the [Lodgment program framework](#).

Find out about:

- [Obligation type](#)
- [Tax returns by client type](#)
- [Taxpayers with overdue tax returns](#)
- [Taxpayers with a lodgment prosecution](#)
- [Situations where we request earlier lodgment](#)
- [Lodgment and payment dates on weekends or public holidays](#)
- [Safe harbour](#)

Obligation type

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/Obligation-type/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34537

What you need to know about the lodgment program, including due dates for lodgment and payment, organised by obligation type (except tax returns).

Find out about:

- [Activity statements](#)
- [Super lodgment](#)
- [PAYG withholding payment summary annual report](#)
- [FBT return](#)
- [Taxable payments annual report](#)
- [Annual PAYG instalment notice](#)
- [PAYG withholding annual reports](#)
- [Franking account return](#)
- [Annual investment income report](#)
- [Venture capital deficit tax return](#)
- [Early stage innovation company report](#)

See also:

- [Tax returns by client type](#)

Activity statements

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/Obligation-type/Activity-statements/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34538

Information for tax professionals on preparing and lodging activity statements.

On this page:

- [Lodgment and payment due dates](#)
- [Eligible activity statements](#)
- [Channels for electronic lodgment](#)
- [Types of activity statements](#)
- [Elections](#)
- [Variations](#)

Lodgment and payment due dates

The Lodgment program due dates are automatically applied when:

- you or your client have elected to receive and lodge the activity statement electronically and
- it meets the eligibility criteria.

If you have not elected to receive and lodge the activity statement electronically, the lodgment program due dates for lodgment and payment will not apply.

Note: If your client is an active Single Touch Payroll (STP) reporter they will be eligible for the Lodgment program due dates for lodgment and payment even where they have not elected to receive and lodge the activity statement electronically.

The due date for eligible activity statements will be displayed once the activity statement has been made available online.

See also:

- [Online services for agents user guide – activity statements](#)

Eligible activity statements

Quarterly activity statements are eligible for the Lodgment program due dates, unless:

- it includes a PAYG instalment monthly obligation
- it is a PAYG instalment consolidated head entity activity statement
- the entity has a GST monthly cycle (excluding the December concession)
- it is a Quarterly PAYG instalment notice (Form R), Quarterly GST instalment notice (Form S) or Quarterly GST and PAYG instalment notice (Form T).

Activity statements with only a monthly PAYG IT withholding cycle are not eligible for the Lodgment program due dates.

Note:

- BAS Forms G and Y may be eligible for the December activity statement lodgment program due date with a lodgment due date of 21 February.

The form or activity statement name is visible in the practitioner lodgment service (PLS) and Online services for agents, and varies depending on the:

- client's reporting cycle
- client's elected reporting method
- details being reported.

Clients who operate on substituted accounting periods (SAP) are only eligible if their quarters align with the standard quarters.

See also:

- [Business activity statements](#) (BAS)

Channels for electronic lodgment

Our preferred channels for lodgment of activity statements are:

- Practitioner lodgment service (PLS)
- Online services for agents.

Receive and lodge activity statements online to ensure that your clients receive the lodgment program due dates. You should also make sure that your registered agent number (RAN) is provided against the activity statement role.

The lodgment program due dates will now show on your client lists where you or your client have elected to receive and lodge the activity statement online and the activity statement meets the eligibility criteria.

Forms R, S and T are linked to an election to pay quarterly instalments. Lodgment is only required if the client is varying the instalment amount.

Types of activity statements

Activity statements may be monthly, quarterly, or annual.

Monthly activity statements

Monthly activity statements are due for lodgment and payment on the 21st day of the following month. However, the December business activity statement is not due for lodgment and payment until 21 February for business clients who:

- have up to \$10 million annual turnover
- report GST monthly
- lodge electronically.

Note: Businesses that are registered for deferred GST are not eligible for the 21 February due date.

Clients who do not have a monthly GST obligation but are registered for PAYG withholding monthly or PAYG instalments monthly, and have at least one quarterly obligation (for example, GST, PAYG instalment, or FBT instalments) will receive:

- a monthly activity statement for the first two months of the quarter (due on the 21st day of the following month)
- a quarterly activity statement for the third month (due on the 28th day of the following month or 28 February for quarter two).

Quarterly activity statements

Quarterly activity statements are due on the 28th day of the month following the reporting period, except for quarter two, which is due on 28 February of the following calendar year.

Lodgment program due dates for lodgment and payment are only available if you or your client have elected to receive and lodge the activity statement online and the activity statement meets the eligibility criteria.

The dates will now show on your client lists once the activity statement has been made available online.

If you or your client have elected to receive and lodge their quarterly activity statement by paper, they will not receive the Lodgment program due dates.

Note: If your client is an active STP reporter, they will be entitled to the Lodgment program due dates.

Due dates for registered agents

Quarterly lodgment obligation	Original due date	Lodgment program - lodgment and payment due date
Quarter 4, 2019–20	28 July 2020	25 August 2020
Quarter 1, 2020–21	28 October 2020	25 November 2020
Quarter 2, 2020–21	28 February 2021	Not applicable
Quarter 3, 2020–21	28 April 2021	26 May 2021
	28 July	25 August 2021

Quarter 4, 2020–21	2021	To be confirmed when the <i>Lodgment program 2021–22</i> is developed.
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Quarterly PAYG instalment activity statement – head companies of consolidated groups

Quarterly PAYG instalment activity statements are due on the 21st day of the month following the end of the reporting period.

If you finalise PAYG instalments for the 2019–20 year before lodging your client's 2020 tax return, this will ensure they receive the correct instalment credit in their tax assessments.

Annual GST returns

If a taxpayer is a GST instalment payer they must lodge an annual GST return.

If a taxpayer elects to report and pay (or claim a refund of) GST annually, they must lodge an annual GST return.

The due date for lodgment (and payment if required) of annual GST returns is either:

- the due date of the taxpayer's tax return – if a taxpayer has a tax return lodgment obligation
- 28 February 2021 – if a taxpayer does not have a tax return lodgment obligation.

See also:

- [When and how to report and pay GST](#)

Instalment notices

Instalment notices (also called remittance advices) include:

- quarterly PAYG instalment notice (form R)
- quarterly GST instalment notice (form S)
- quarterly PAYG and GST instalment notice (form T)
- annual PAYG instalment notice (form N).

You don't need to lodge these forms with us if you are paying the amount advised. Forms R, S and T have the following payment due dates:

- 28 July 2020
- 28 October 2020
- 28 February 2021
- 28 April 2021
- 28 July 2021.

Form N has a payment due date of 21 October 2020.

If you vary the amount to be paid (or with form N, use the rate method to calculate your instalment amount) you must complete the form and lodge it by the payment due date.

The instalment notices can be lodged electronically via PLS using the generic business activity statement. These notices are not eligible for the Lodgment program due dates.

Elections

When your clients receive an activity statement with an instalment amount option and an instalment rate option, they can elect either of these two options. They should select the option and complete the related labels. For the election to take effect the activity statement must be received on or before the due date.

If your client received a form R or T in quarter 1 and would like to change to the instalment rate option, phone us on 13 28 66 on or before 28 October. We will arrange the change of option and send a new instalment activity statement for lodgment.

Variations

Business and investment taxpayers in PAYG instalments could end up paying more than their expected tax liability for the relevant income year. If this is the case, they are entitled to vary their PAYG instalment rate or amount to ensure that the correct amount of tax is paid.

A business or investment taxpayer may want to consider varying the instalment rate or amount if there has been a substantial change in the proportion of the business and investment income. For example, if they expect to have much higher tax deductions for a similar level of business and investment income.

When the varied instalment rate or amount is less than 85% of the rate or amount calculated by the Commissioner of Taxation, a taxpayer is liable to pay the general interest charge (GIC) on the shortfall. Depending on the circumstances, we may consider granting a full or partial remission of the GIC.

See also:

- [How to vary your PAYG instalments](#)
- [Remission of interest charges](#)

Super lodgment

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent->

- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34549

If your client is an employer with super guarantee obligations, a self-managed super fund (SMSF) or an APRA-regulated fund, they will have lodgment obligations.

On this page:

- [Key lodgment due dates](#)
- [Newly registered SMSFs](#)
- [Audit requirements](#)
- [Member Account Attribute Service and Member Account Transaction Service](#)
- [Member contributions statements](#)
- [Event-based reporting](#)

Key lodgment due dates

Table: Key dates for super providers and for employers with super guarantee obligations

Lodgment due date	Description
28 July 2020	<p>Super guarantee contributions for quarter 4 2019–20 (1 April – 30 June 2020) to be made to the fund.</p> <p>If an employer does not pay minimum super contributions for quarter 4 by this date, they must pay the super guarantee charge and lodge a <i>Superannuation guarantee charge statement – quarterly</i> form with us by 28 August 2020. The super guarantee charge is not tax deductible.</p>
14 August 2020	<p>Departing Australia Superannuation Payment (DASP) data records for the 2019–20 year that form part of the PAYG withholding payment summary annual report.</p>
28 August 2020	<p>Lodge and pay <i>Superannuation guarantee charge (SGC) statement – quarterly</i> form for quarter 4 2019–20 (1 April – 30 June 2020) if required contributions were not made by the due date. The super guarantee charge is not tax deductible.</p>
28 October 2020	<p>Super guarantee contributions for quarter 1, 2020–21 (1 July – 30 September 2020) to be made to the fund.</p> <p>If an employer does not pay minimum super contributions for quarter 1 by this date, they must pay the super guarantee charge and lodge a <i>Superannuation guarantee charge statement – quarterly</i> form with us by 28 November 2020. The</p>

	super guarantee charge is not tax deductible.
31 October 2020	<p>Tax return for all super funds where the Trustee has been advised to lodge by this date, or one or more prior-year tax returns were outstanding as at 30 June 2020 (if all outstanding prior-year returns have been lodged by 31 October 2020, the 2020 tax return will be due as in the normal program).</p> <p>Tax return for super funds prosecuted for non-lodgment of prior-year tax returns and advised of a lodgment due date of 31 October 2020.</p> <p>DASP annual report</p> <p>Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA) annual return and audit report – lodgment with APRA.</p> <p>Report lost members for the period 1 January – 30 June 2020.</p>
28 November 2020	Lodge and pay <i>Superannuation guarantee charge (SGC) statement – quarterly</i> form for quarter 1, 2020–21 (1 July – 30 September 2020) if required contributions were not made by the due date. The super guarantee charge is not tax deductible.
1 December 2020	<p>Payment of income tax for taxable large/medium super funds (lodgment of tax return due 15 January 2021).</p> <p>Payment of 2020 income tax for super funds where one or more prior-year tax returns were outstanding as at 30 June 2020 (lodgment of 2020 tax return was due 31 October 2020).</p> <p>Payment of 2020 income tax for super funds where fund was prosecuted for non-lodgment of prior year returns and advised of a lodgment due date of 31 October 2020.</p>
15 January 2021	Tax return for taxable large/medium super funds for latest year lodged – unless required earlier (payment for these super funds was due 1 December 2020).
28 January 2021	<p>Super guarantee contributions for quarter 2, 2020–21 (1 October –31 December 2020) to be made to the fund.</p> <p>If an employer does not pay minimum super contributions for quarter 2 by this date, they must pay the super guarantee charge and lodge a <i>Superannuation guarantee charge statement – quarterly</i> form with us by 28 February 2021. The super guarantee charge is not tax deductible.</p>
	Tax return for non-taxable large/medium super funds by latest year lodged.

28 February 2021	<p>Annual return for new registrant (taxable and non-taxable) SMSFs, unless they were advised of a 31 October 2020 due date at finalisation of a review of the SMSF at registration. Payment (if required) is also due on this date.</p> <p>Tax return for new registrant large/medium super funds. Payment (if required) is also due on this date.</p> <p>Lodge and pay <i>Superannuation guarantee charge statement – quarterly</i> form for quarter 2, 2020–21 (1 October – 31 December 2020) if required contributions were not made by the due date. The super guarantee charge is not tax deductible.</p>
31 March 2021	<p>Tax return for super funds with total income in excess of \$2 million in latest year lodged (excluding large/medium taxpayers). Payment (if required) is also due on this date.</p>
28 April 2021	<p>Super guarantee contributions for quarter 3, 2020–21 (1 January – 31 March 2021) to be made to the fund.</p> <p>If an employer does not pay minimum super contributions for quarter 3 by this date, they must pay the super guarantee charge and lodge a <i>Superannuation guarantee charge statement – quarterly</i> form with us by 28 May 2021. The super guarantee charge is not tax deductible</p>
30 April 2021	<p>Report lost members for the period 1 July – 31 December 2020.</p>
15 May 2021	<p>Fund tax return not required earlier and not eligible for the 5 June lodgment concession date.</p> <p>Payment (if required) is also due on this date.</p>
28 May 2021	<p>Lodge and pay <i>Superannuation guarantee charge statement – quarterly</i> form for quarter 3 2020–21 (1 January – 31 March 2021) if required contributions were not made by the due date. The super guarantee charge is not tax deductible.</p>
5 June 2021	<p>Tax returns for super funds that were non-taxable or received a refund by latest year lodged and are non-taxable or will receive a refund in current year.</p> <p>Note: This concession is only available to super funds with a lodgment due date of 15 May 2021 – it is not available to large/medium taxpayers or funds with an earlier due date</p>

Newly registered SMSFs

Annual returns for new registrant (taxable and non-taxable) SMSFs are due for lodgment by:

- 31 October 2020 for SMSFs who prepare their own annual return
- 28 February 2021 for SMSFs who are tax agent clients, unless they were advised of a 31 October 2020 due date at finalisation of a review of the SMSF at registration.

An SMSF is not legally established until the fund has assets set aside for the benefit of members.

Our systems will not process returns with zero assets, and the supervisory levy does not need to be paid for newly registered SMSFs that registered in the 2019–20 financial year and:

- were not legally established
- had no assets set aside for the benefit of members.

You cannot lodge a *Return not necessary (RNN)* form, also known as a non-lodgment advice, for an SMSF.

However, if your SMSF does not have assets set aside for the benefit of members in the first year it was registered, you can ask us to either:

- cancel the fund's registration
- flag the SMSF's record as 'return not necessary' if it meets the following conditions and confirms in writing that:
 - although registered, it had no assets and did not receive contributions or rollovers in the first financial year
 - it has provided documentary evidence of the date the SMSF first held assets and commenced operating, for example the SMSF's first bank statement
 - it will be lodging future returns.

RNNs will only be granted in limited circumstances. We only consider RNN requests if the SMSF confirms and provides supporting evidence that it meets all the eligibility conditions.

Your written request should include the SMSF's name, TFN, ABN and documentary evidence of the date assets were first placed into the fund.

Using Practice mail in Online services for agents, select Superannuation as the topic, and choose from the following mail subjects:

- SMSF new registrant - Return Not Necessary request or;
- SMSF cancellation of registration where the fund has not been legally established.

All other funds that have not yet set aside assets for the benefit of members should cancel their registration and re-register when assets are available.

When an SMSF that has previously advised that an annual return was not necessary is legally established and needs to lodge an annual return for the first time, the due date of the first return lodged by a tax agent will be the new registrant due date, which is currently 28 February.

See also:

- [Lodge SMSF annual returns](#)

Audit requirements

All SMSFs must have their financial accounts and statements for the fund audited each year by an approved auditor. The auditor must assess the fund's overall compliance with the *Superannuation Industry (Superannuation) Act 1993* and associated regulations (a compliance audit) and the fund's financial statements (a financial audit).

The auditor must provide the audit report before the due date for lodgment of the *Self-managed superannuation fund annual return*. The return must not be lodged until the audit of the fund has been finalised. Auditors must be registered with the Australian Securities & Investments Commission as an approved SMSF auditor and have a valid [SMSF auditor number](#)²⁷ (SAN).

See also:

- [SMSF auditors](#)

Member Account Attribute Service and Member Account Transaction Service

APRA-regulated funds report member contributions information to us via the:

- Member Account Attribute Service (MAAS) – used for reporting updates to member account attributes within 5 business days, and
- Member Account Transaction Service (MATS) – used for reporting member contributions data within 10 business days.

Lost members can be reported via MAAS.

See also:

- [Fund reporting protocol](#)

Member contributions statements

The Member Contributions Statement has now been replaced by the Member Account Attribute Service (MAAS) and Member Account Transaction Service (MATS) for APRA-regulated funds.

SMSFs will provide member contributions information when completing the SMSF annual return.

Event-based reporting

Super funds have event-based reporting obligations due to the transfer balance cap.

The transfer balance account report (TBAR) is used to report events that affect a member's transfer balance.

For an SMSF, timeframes for reporting are determined by the total super balances of all SMSF members.

Where all members of an SMSF have a total super balance of less than \$1 million, the SMSF can report this information at the same time as its annual return.

SMSFs that have any members with a total super balance of \$1 million or more must report events affecting members' transfer balances within 28 days after the end of the quarter in which the event occurs.

APRA-regulated funds need to lodge a TBAR within 10 business days after the end of the month in which a transfer balance account event occurred.

See also:

- [Transfer balance cap](#)
- [Event based reporting for SMSFs](#)
- [Transfer balance cap – Commissioner's commutation authority](#)
- [Super transfer balance account report instructions](#)

PAYG withholding payment summary annual report

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/Obligation-type/PAYG-withholding-payment-summary-annual-report/>
- Last modified: 29 Jul 2020
- QC 34543

The due date for lodgment of your client's annual reports depends on the class of payees included in the report, and whether a registered agent was involved in preparing the report.

On this page:

- [Lodgment due dates](#)
- [Closely held lodgment concession](#)

- [Key terms](#)

Lodgment due dates

The due date for lodgment of the annual report is worked out by:

- determining the class of payees the payer has included in the report
- whether there is registered tax or BAS agent involvement in the preparation of the report.

We allow BAS agents who are responsible for lodgment of the PAYG withholding payment summary annual report access to the lodgment due date of 30 September for relevant clients.

Lodgment dates for the PAYG withholding payment summary annual report

Lodgment due date	Reports for
14 August 2020	Either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • large withholders (annual withholding more than \$1 million) • payers who do not have registered agent involvement in preparing the report.
30 September 2020	Payers who have registered agent involvement in preparing the report and have either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one or more arm's length payees • only closely held payees but did not meet the compliance test.
Due date of payer's tax return	Payers, including personal services income (PSI) entities, who have tax agent involvement in preparing the report and both the following apply – they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have only closely held payees • meet the compliance test and notify us of any additional eligible clients by 29 September 2020.

Closely held lodgment concession

If your client is eligible for the closely held lodgment concession we will email you. If you have eligible clients but we haven't contacted you, you can submit a request form.

Eligibility

Payers who have only closely held payees and who meet the compliance test will be eligible to access the closely held lodgment concession, allowing registered tax agents to lodge their report by the due date of the payer's tax return.

To be eligible for the concession this year, your client must have:

- only closely held employees
- lodged their PAYG withholding payment summary annual report 2019 by 30 June 2020
- lodged their 2019 tax return by 30 June 2020, and not received a failure to lodge on time (FTL) penalty for that return
- registered for PAYG withholding.

A closely held employee is one who is a non-arm's length employee. This means they are directly related to the entity from which they receive payments, for example:

- family members of a family business
- directors of a company
- shareholders or beneficiaries.

The closely held lodgment concession does not extend to BAS agents. The latest date that a BAS agent can lodge the PAYG withholding summary annual report on behalf of their clients is 30 September.

This concession also does not apply to large withholders. They must still lodge by 14 August.

Emails to agents about the closely held concession

In early August, we email tax agents with clients who are eligible for the concession. The email outlines the lodgment concession process for the year, and includes a list of:

- your clients who have been granted the lodgment concession for 2020
- those clients who received the concession last year but are not currently eligible this year and the reason why.

If you have no other clients who are eligible for the concession, you do not need to take any action with the list.

Reasons why clients are not eligible for the closely held concession

You may have clients who received the concession last year but who are not currently eligible this year. If so, your email will contain a reason code that explains why they are currently not eligible.

Clients that lodged by Single Touch Payroll (STP) in the 2020 financial year will no longer receive this concession. STP provides alternative concessions for closely held payees.

See also:

- [Single Touch Payroll – Concessional reporting](#)

Reason codes explaining why clients are not eligible

Reason code	Description
1	STP Reporter
3	The client has other payees (not all closely held).
4	The client is a large withholder.
7	Our records show the client is deceased.
8	The client has not lodged their 2019 tax return.
9	The client received an FTL on time penalty for the late lodgment of their 2019 tax return.
10	The client has not lodged their 2019 PAYG withholding payment summary annual report.
11	The request for the lodgment concession was made after 29 September 2020. The client will be assessed for eligibility for the 2021 concession.
21	Client has a debt collection indicator.
41	Our records show the client is insolvent.
50	The client cancelled their PAYG withholding registration in a prior financial year.
51	The client is not registered for PAYG withholding.

Closely held entity lodgment concession request form

If you have clients who have not been granted the concession but you believe they are now eligible to receive it, you can request the concession for them by adding their name and Australian business number (ABN) to the *Closely held entity lodgment concession request form*.

You must submit the *Closely held entity lodgment concession request form* (NAT 15838) by 29 September 2020 (or the next business day). We will not process requests we receive after this date.

We will review the eligibility of all the clients in your request and notify you of the

outcome.

If you do not notify us by this date and you lodge their annual report after 30 September 2020, we may apply an FTL penalty which may be remitted if extenuating circumstances exist.

You can also use the closely held lodgment concession request form to:

- request a review of a decision to not grant the concession
- advise us of clients who are no longer eligible for the concession and the reason why.

Next step:

- Complete the [Closely held entity lodgment concession request form](#)

Key terms

When we work out the due date for lodgment of this obligation, we use the following terms:

- An arm's length payee (or employee) is a payee who is not directly associated with the payer, director, shareholder or beneficiary – for example, an employee or contractor who has no other connection with the payer.
- A closely held payee (or employee) is one who is a non-arm's length payee (or employee); the term non-arm's length payee refers to someone who is directly related to the entity that they receive payments from (the payer) – examples include a director of a company, the spouse or the children of the director, a shareholder or a beneficiary.
- A personal services income entity is a company, partnership or trust in receipt of an individual's PSI.
- Registered agent involvement is when the tax agent or BAS agent has provided advice to help their client prepare the PAYG withholding payment summary annual report (including checking the report to ensure it is completed correctly) or prepares the report.

FBT return

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/Obligation-type/FBT-return/>
- Last modified: 19 Mar 2021
- QC 34541

Fringe benefits tax (FBT) returns can only be lodged through the practitioner lodgment service (PLS).

The statutory due date for lodgment and payment is 21 May. The due dates for lodgment of 2021 FBT returns for all tax agents are:

- 25 June, if the return is lodged via PLS
- 21 May, if the return is lodged by paper.

Payment due date change

The due date for payment under the lodgment program is now 25 June, if you lodge your client's return via PLS. This is a permanent change in response to feedback from tax practitioners.

If you lodge your client's FBT return by paper, the payment due date will remain as 21 May.

Other considerations

To ensure your clients are covered by your lodgment program for their 2020 FBT return, you must be appointed as the tax agent for that client role by 21 May.

If your client does not have to lodge an FBT return for the year of lodgment, notify us as early as possible as processing may take up to 28 days around peak lodgment dates.

See also:

- [Practitioner lodgment service](#)
- [FBT – non-lodgment advice \(registered agents\)](#)

Taxable payments annual report

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/Obligation-type/Taxable-payments-annual-report/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34546

The *Taxable payments annual report* is due for lodgment by 28 August.

See also:

- [Taxable payments annual report \(TPAR\)](#)

Annual PAYG instalment notice

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/Obligation-type/Annual-PAYG-instalment-notice/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34539

Although annual pay as you go (PAYG) instalments aren't due until 21 October (for income years ending 30 June), we issue instalment notices in early July to help you identify:

- clients with an annual PAYG instalment obligation
- the amount of their PAYG instalment liability.

Paying annual instalments

If you choose to pay the amount calculated by us at T5 on the instalment notice and you've lodged your client's tax return by 21 October, you won't need to lodge the instalment notice. Simply pay the amount by 21 October.

If you choose to pay the rate calculated by us at T2 on the instalment notice, it is best to lodge the instalment notice (activity statement) prior to lodging the tax return.

There is still an obligation to pay the instalment by the due date and general interest charge (GIC) may apply to any amount not paid by this date.

Varying your client's instalment amount

If your client's circumstances have changed and the amount we calculate will result in them paying more or less than their actual income tax liability, you can vary their instalment amount for them.

If you wish to vary your client's annual PAYG instalment amount, it's best to do this before lodging their tax return. This will ensure they receive the correct instalment credit on their income tax assessment.

To vary the instalment amount:

- complete labels T6, T4 and 5A on the annual PAYG instalment notice
- return it to us before lodging your client's tax return or by 21 October (whichever comes first)
- pay the varied amount by 21 October.

If you've already lodged your client's tax return before making the variation, you will need to pay the amount we calculate at T5 on the instalment notice by 21 October. Do not vary this instalment amount as this may result in the wrong amount being credited towards the income account.

Updating your client's contact details

If your client has changed their email or postal address, remember to tell us so they can continue to receive a notification advising their activity statement is ready.

See also:

- [Updating client details](#)

PAYG withholding annual reports

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/Obligation-type/PAYG-withholding-annual-reports/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34544

The *PAYG withholding annual report (no ABN withholding)* (NAT 3448) is due for lodgment by 31 October.

The *PAYG withholding annual report (interest, dividend and royalty payments paid to non-residents)* (NAT 7187) is due for lodgment by 31 October.

The *PAYG withholding annual report (payments to foreign residents)* (NAT 12413) is due for lodgment by 31 October.

Franking account return

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/Obligation-type/Franking-account-return/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34542

When a lodgment obligation exists, you must lodge a franking account tax return.

If there is an amount payable, franking account returns are due for lodgment on the last day of the month following the end of the income year. The franking deficit tax is also payable on this date.

A lodgment date of 31 October exists when both of the following apply:

- The franking account return is a disclosure only (no amount payable).
- The taxpayer is a 30 June balancer.

See also:

- [Franking account tax return instructions 2020](#)

Annual investment income report

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/Obligation-type/Annual-investment-income-report/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34547

The *Annual investment income report* (AIR) is due for lodgment by 31 October.

Venture capital deficit tax return

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/Obligation-type/Venture-capital-deficit-tax-return/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34548

The *Venture capital deficit tax return* is due for lodgment and payment on the last day of the month following the end of the income year for 30 June balancers.

Early stage innovation company report

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/Obligation-type/Early-stage-innovation-company-report/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 56088

Companies are required to complete an early stage innovation company report if they issue new shares to one or more investors during a financial year that could lead to an investor being entitled to access the early stage investor tax incentives.

The *Early stage innovation company report* is due for lodgment by 31 July each year for new shares issued in the previous financial year.

See also:

- [For early stage innovation companies \(ESICs\)](#)

Tax returns by client type

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/Tax-returns-by-client-type/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34550

The lodgment program is structured to promote progressive lodgment and allow you to spread your workload over a 12-month period. The lodgment program is for your benefit, and not a deferral of time to lodge and pay (if required) for your clients.

We advise of all lodgment due dates for all of your clients by the end of July.

Lodgment and payment due dates may change if your client's circumstances change – for example, a client's tax level may change when we process a prior year amendment.

Find out about:

- [Individuals and trusts](#)
- [Companies and super funds](#)
- [Large/medium taxpayers](#)
- [Partnerships](#)
- [Consolidated groups](#)
- [Substituted accounting periods](#)

Note: If your client list does not display a due date for lodgment, or you are unsure of your client's lodgment due date, phone us on 13 72 86 Fast Key Code 1 3 2 for clarification.

Individuals and trusts

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/Tax-returns-by-client-type/Individuals-and-trusts/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34551

Factors that may affect the lodgment due dates for individuals and trusts include their lodgment and compliance history, their income, whether they are new

registrants and whether the 5 June concession applies.

Lodgment due dates

Lodgment due date	Entity description
31 October 2020	<p>Tax return for all individuals and trusts where one or more prior year tax returns were outstanding as at 30 June 2020.</p> <p>Tax return for clients prosecuted for non-lodgment of prior year tax returns and advised of a lodgment due date of 31 October 2020.</p> <p>Note: Some prosecuted clients may have been given a different lodgment due date. Refer to the letter you received for the client's applicable due date.</p>
15 January 2021	Large/medium trusts (annual total income more than \$10 million in latest year lodged) where the trust was taxable in latest year lodged.
28 February 2021	Large/medium trusts (annual total income more than \$10 million in latest year lodged) where the trust was non-taxable in latest year lodged.
28 February 2021	New registrant large/medium trusts.
31 March 2021	Tax return for individuals and trusts whose latest return resulted in a tax liability of \$20,000 or more (excluding large/medium trusts).
15 May 2021	Tax returns for all remaining individuals and trusts not required earlier and not eligible for the 5 June concession (including new registrations).

Concession for 15 May 2021

We allow lodgment of tax returns past the lodgment due date of 15 May for:

- individuals
- partnerships
- trusts.

The concession allows these tax returns to be lodged by 5 June without penalty, provided that any payment required is also made by this date.

This is a concessional arrangement to remit the FTL penalty, where lodgment and

payment are made by 5 June for tax returns otherwise due by 15 May 2021.

You do not need to apply for a deferral to receive the 5 June concession date – however, you must apply if you need a lodgment deferral beyond 5 June for these clients.

Concessional date

Lodgment date	Entity description
5 June 2021	<p>Tax return for entities who were non-taxable or received a credit assessment in the latest year lodged, and are actually non-taxable or receiving a credit assessment in the current year (unless due earlier) – all entities with a lodgment due date of 15 May 2021 except large/medium taxpayers or head companies of consolidated groups.</p> <p>Tax return for individuals, partnerships and trusts with a lodgment due date of 15 May 2021, provided payment is also made by this date.</p> <p>Note: This is not a lodgment due date, but a concessional arrangement where penalties will be waived if lodgment and payment are made by this date.</p>

Payment of individual and trust tax returns due 15 May 2021 only

Staggered payment date arrangements exist for individual and trust clients whose tax returns have a lodgment due date of 15 May 2021. Your client's payment due date will depend on when their tax return is lodged and processed. If the tax return is lodged:

- up to and including 12 February 2021, the payment date is 21 March 2021
- from 13 February 2021 to 12 March 2021 (inclusive), the payment date is 21 April 2021
- from 13 March 2021, the payment date is 5 June 2021.

The payment dates above are the earliest possible due dates for payment of tax and provide at least two weeks for processing. If processing of a tax return takes longer than this, the actual due date for payment on the notice of assessment will be later than the dates indicated above.

Payment of individual and trust tax returns with a due date other than 15 May 2021

Due dates for payment of individual and trust income tax assessments when tax returns must be lodged by any date other than 15 May 2021

If...	then...
the tax return is lodged on or before the lodgment due date	payment will be due on the later of 21 days after the: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• relevant lodgment due date, or• notice of assessment is deemed received (which is three days after issue).
the tax return is lodged late	any tax is payable 21 days after the due date for lodgment.
the tax return is not lodged at all and a default assessment is issued	any tax is payable 21 days after the due date for lodgment.

Companies and super funds

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/Tax-returns-by-client-type/Companies-and-super-funds/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34562

The lodgment due dates for companies and super funds are displayed on all client listings generated by the end of July 2020.

You can review your payment options online or phone us on 1800 815 886 between 8.00am and 6.00pm AEST, Monday to Friday.

Next steps:

- Online services for agents – [Payment options](#)
- All payment options – [How to pay](#)

SMSFs must lodge an SMSF annual return and pay a supervisory levy. For the 2019–20 income year, they must include the levy amount in their income tax calculation and make their payment (if required) using standard payment methods.

Unless the fund is being wound up, we cannot process returns for SMSFs that have no assets. Do not lodge these returns or pay the supervisory levy.

30 June balancers

Lodgment and payment due dates for 30 June balancing companies and super funds

Due date for lodgment	Due date for payment	Description
31 October 2020	1 December 2020	Entities with one or more prior year returns outstanding as at 30 June 2020.
31 October 2020	1 December 2020	Entities prosecuted for non-lodgment of prior year tax returns and advised of a lodgment due date of 31 October 2020.
31 October 2020	1 December 2020	Entities that may be required to lodge early.
1 December 2020	As per notice of assessment	Companies that are not full self-assessment (NFSA) taxpayers. Note: Companies not subject to full self-assessment include agents for non-resident insurers and re-insurers, and overseas shipping companies.
15 January 2021	1 December 2020	Large/medium taxpayers whose 2019 tax return was taxable – unless required earlier.
28 February 2021	28 February 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subsidiary member of a consolidated group that has exited the consolidated group in the financial year. Large/medium taxpayers whose 2019 tax return was non-taxable. This includes entities whose 2019 tax return was made not necessary by 30 June 2020. <p>Large/medium taxpayers established between 1 July 2018 and 30 June 2019 and the 2019 tax return is not necessary and you advised us that a tax return was not necessary.</p> <p>New registrant large/medium taxpayers.</p> <p>Head companies of consolidated groups that are new registrants.</p>

		<p>Note: If the new registrant is a head company of a consolidated group, it is important to refer to Consolidated groups. In some instances, the company may need to lodge using the arrangements for a large entity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New registrant SMSF – unless required earlier.
31 March 2021	31 March 2021	Entities with total income in the 2018–19 year of more than \$2 million unless required earlier.
15 May 2021	15 May 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entities that may not have an obligation to lodge. • Entities who are subsidiary members of a consolidated group that has been consolidated for a full year. These clients should not have an obligation to lodge. • Non-profit organisations that assess that they have a requirement to lodge and have not been allocated an earlier lodgment due date. <p>Note: Entities must assess their obligation to lodge a tax return on an annual basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New registrants, excluding large/medium taxpayers, head companies of consolidated groups and SMSFs. <p>All remaining entities that are tax agent clients.</p>
5 June 2021	5 June 2021	<p>Tax return for companies and super funds who were non-taxable or received a credit assessment in the latest year lodged, and are actually non-taxable or receiving a credit assessment in the current year (unless due earlier) – all entities with a lodgment due date of 15 May 2021 except large/medium taxpayers or head companies of consolidated groups.</p> <p>Note: This is not a lodgment due date but a concessional arrangement where penalties will be waived if lodgment is made by this date.</p>

Companies and super funds with an approved substituted accounting period (SAP)

You can view lodgment due dates on client lists requested through Online services for agents and the Practitioner lodgment service (PLS) for SAP clients.

Companies and super funds with an approved SAP – dates based on the end of the applicable balancing period

Due date for lodgment	Due date for payment	Description
1st day of 6th month after the end of the income year	On the notice of assessment	Entities that are NFSA companies operating on an approved SAP Note: Companies not subject to full self-assessment include agents for non-resident insurers and re-insurers, and overseas shipping companies
15th day of 7th month after the end of the income year	1st day of 6th month after the end of the income year	Entities that may not have an obligation to lodge, operating on an approved SAP
15th day of 7th month after the end of the income year	1st day of 6th month after the end of the income year	Entities operating on an approved SAP, with one or more prior year returns outstanding
15th day of 7th month after the end of the income year	1st day of 6th month after the end of the income year	Entities operating on an approved SAP. These entities assess their requirement to lodge
15th day of 7th month after the end of the income year	1st day of 6th month after the end of the income year	Entities operating on an approved SAP that are a subsidiary member of a consolidated group that has been consolidated for a full year. These clients should not have an obligation to lodge
15th day of 7th month after the end of the income year	1st day of 6th month after the end of the income year	Entities operating on an approved SAP and that are a subsidiary member that has exited from a consolidated group in the financial year
15th day of 7th month after the end of the income year	1st day of 6th month after the end of the income year	Entities operating on an approved SAP Head companies of consolidated groups that are new registrants operating on an approved SAP

Not full self-assessment taxpayers (NFSA)

Separate payment and lodgment arrangements apply to companies that are not full self-assessment (NFSA) taxpayers.

Companies shown with their Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) code that are NFSA taxpayers

ANZSIC code	Industry	<i>Income Tax Assessment Act 1936</i> reference
99020	Overseas ships freight	Section 129
99050	Insurance and re-insurance with a non-resident	Sections 144 and 148
99070	Control of non-resident's money	Section 255

Entities that are NFSA taxpayers must lodge their tax returns by the first day of the sixth month after the end of their balancing period.

Due dates for payment (similar to those for individuals and trusts)

If...	then...
the tax return is lodged on or before the lodgment due date	payment will be due on the later of either 21 days after the: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• relevant lodgment due date• notice of assessment is deemed received (which is three days after issue)
the tax return is lodged late	any tax is payable 21 days after the due date for lodgment
the tax return is not lodged at all and a default assessment is issued	any tax is payable 21 days after the due date for lodgment

You can find the due date for payment on the notice of assessment.

Large/medium taxpayers

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/Tax-returns-by-client-type/Large/medium-taxpayers/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34565

You are a large/medium taxpayer for tax return lodgment purposes if you are a:

- company with an annual total income of more than \$10 million
- head company of a consolidated or multiple entry consolidated (MEC) group with an annual total income greater than \$10 million (through the single entity rule)
- life and general insurance company, re-insurer or friendly society, regardless of income level
- super fund or pooled super trust that has either an annual total income greater than \$10 million or investments of more than \$50 million, or both
- non-complying super fund or pooled super fund
- trust with an annual total income greater than \$10 million last year
- full self-assessment partner of a partnership, where the partnership's total income was over \$10 million last year
- full self-assessment taxpayer that had an annual total income of more than \$10 million last year
- taxpayer we advise to lodge as a large/medium taxpayer.

Your lodgment due date is:

- 31 October 2020 – if one or more prior year returns are outstanding at 30 June 2020 (company and super fund payment is due 1 December 2020)
- 15 January 2021 – taxable large/medium taxpayer in the immediate prior year (company and super fund payment is due 1 December 2020)
- 28 February 2021 – non-taxable large/medium taxpayer (in the immediate prior year) and new registrant large/medium taxpayer (if required, company and super fund payment is due 28 February 2021).

The agent assessed deferral option does not apply if you have a lodgment due date of 15 January 2021. However, you can request an ATO assessed deferral.

Partnerships

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/Tax-returns-by-client-type/Partnerships/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34563

Complete and lodge partnership tax returns progressively so there is sufficient time to allow lodgment of the partners' tax returns by their lodgment due date.

Partnerships that operate on approved SAPs must lodge their tax return by the last day of the fourth month after the close of the accounting period adopted.

When not to lodge

Do not lodge a partnership tax return where your client is an individual and the only income derived jointly (or in common) with another individual was:

- rent from a jointly owned property
- interest from a jointly held account in a financial institution
- dividends from jointly held shares
- and were not in a partnership carrying on a business.

In these instances, each partner is required to include details of all relevant income, expenditure and deduction items, as well as distribution details in their own tax return.

Do not lodge a partnership tax return if the partnership was a subsidiary member of a consolidated group for the full income year.

Consolidated groups

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/Tax-returns-by-client-type/Consolidated-groups/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34564

The lodgment and payment due dates for consolidated groups are affected by the types of members and whether the tax return will be taxable.

15 January lodgment date

The head company of a consolidated group, including a new registrant, must lodge by 15 January 2021, if the following applies:

- any member of the consolidated group is deemed to be a large/medium taxpayer in their latest year lodged
- the consolidated group is deemed to be a large/medium taxpayer through the operation of the single entity rule
- the 2020 tax return will be taxable
- payment of any tax due for these entities is required by 1 December 2020.

28 February lodgment date

The head company of a consolidated group, including a new registrant, must lodge by 28 February 2021 if:

- any member of the consolidated group is deemed to be a large/medium taxpayer in their latest year lodged
- the consolidated group is deemed to be a large/medium taxpayer through the operation of the single entity rule
- the 2020 tax return will be non-taxable.

If a member exits the consolidated group during the financial year, their due date will be 28 February.

Due dates for other consolidated groups

The head company of a consolidated group must lodge and pay any tax due by 31 March 2021 if the following applies – they:

- do not have a member who has been deemed a large/medium taxpayer in the latest year lodged
- do have a member who had total income of more than \$2 million in the latest year lodged.

All other head companies of consolidated groups must lodge by 15 May 2021.

When a head company lodges a consolidated tax return for the first time, the due date for lodgment of that tax return is the latest date on which the group's *Notification of formation of an income tax consolidated group* form can be lodged.

Consolidated groups that operate under an approved SAP

Head companies of consolidated groups that operate under an approved SAP must lodge and pay (where applicable) in accordance with the SAP rules.

Substituted accounting periods

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/Tax-returns-by-client-type/Substituted-accounting-periods/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34569

The lodgment due date for a taxpayer with a substituted accounting period (SAP) depends on the type of entity and the closing date of the adopted accounting period.

On this page:

- [How a SAP works](#)

- [Concession for an early December balancing company and super fund client](#)
- [What tax return form to use](#)

How a SAP works

Taxpayers who have been granted leave to adopt a SAP must meet the following lodgment requirements:

- individuals, partnerships and trusts – due date for lodgment is the last day of the fourth month after the close of the accounting period
- companies and superannuation funds (excluding Not full self-assessment taxpayers (NFSA)) – due date for payment is the first day of the sixth month after the close of the accounting period
- companies and super funds (excluding NFSA) – due date for lodgment is the 15th day of the seventh month after the close of the accounting period.

The lodgment concession available to SAPs does not apply where the SAP entity is not a full self-assessment taxpayer.

Agent assessed deferral requests can now be made for individual, partnership and trust SAPs. Companies and super funds should use the [ATO assessed deferral request form](#).

You can identify clients operating under approved SAP on income tax client listings from the codes shown in the SAP column.

Table: Codes shown in the SAP column converted to balance dates

SAP code	Approved balance date	Term used in lodgment program
A	31 Dec 2019	Early December balancer Note: For information about the availability of a lodgment concession to 31 July, see early December balancing company and super fund clients .
B	31 Jan 2020	January balancer
C	28 Feb 2020	February balancer
D	31 Mar 2020	March balancer
E	30 Apr 2020	April balancer
F	31 May 2020	May balancer
G	31 July 2020	July balancer
H	31 Aug 2020	August balancer

I	30 Sep 2020	September balancer
J	31 Oct 2020	October balancer
K	30 Nov 2020	November balancer
L	31 Dec 2020	Late December balancer Note: you can no longer request a late December balance date

Regardless of the actual date the entity balances, it is deemed to have a financial year ending on the last day of the relevant month.

Concession for an early December balancing company and super fund client

A lodgment concession is available to 31 July for early balancing December SAP clients if they lodge electronically. A full self-assessment company or super fund that is an early December balancer must lodge a tax return no later than the 15th day of the seventh month after the end of their year of income. The due date for lodgment for these entities is 15 July.

We will grant a lodgment concession to 31 July if you lodge your client's tax return electronically by 31 July. We have granted this concession in response to feedback from tax practitioners that tax time software availability makes it difficult to meet the lodgment due date of 15 July. This is particularly the case if firms create their own software.

This is a lodgment concession only. Payment, if required, is still due on the first day of the sixth month after their year of income, which is 1 June. We will not apply a failure to lodge (FTL) penalty to early December balancing SAP clients when their tax return is lodged by 31 July.

Tax return form to use

Tax returns for taxpayers using a SAP should be made on the tax return form for the year in lieu of which the accounting period has been adopted – for example, you should prepare an early balancing 2020 tax return on the 2020 tax return form.

While we make every effort to release tax time stationery as early as possible, if the relevant form has not been produced by the date the taxpayer must lodge using the 2019 tax return form. In these cases, you:

- cannot lodge the tax return electronically
- must write the year of income that the SAP replaces on page one of the tax return – failure to do so may result in us rejecting the lodged tax return
- must provide us with the information requested under any new labels on the 2020 return form – you must do this shortly after we release the 2020 form.

Taxpayers with overdue tax returns

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/Taxpayers-with-overdue-tax-returns/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34566

All taxpayers operating on a standard year (not a SAP) with one or more prior year tax returns overdue as at 30 June 2020 must lodge their 2020 tax return by 31 October 2020:

- companies and super funds that must lodge by this date must pay any 2019–20 income tax liability by 1 December 2020
- individuals and trusts must pay by the date on their notice of assessment.

If all overdue prior year tax returns are lodged by 31 October 2020, the 2020 tax return will be due according to your normal lodgment program. This update for the 2019–20 year can take up to three weeks to appear on your client list.

You do not need to apply for a deferral for the 2020 tax return, provided you have lodged the prior years by 31 October 2020.

The overdue prior year returns may be subject to penalties and interest when lodged.

If a tax return is not lodged for a particular year because there is no obligation to lodge, notify us that a return is not necessary by 30 June. This will ensure that the correct lodgment due date for the current year is set for your client. It also means we will not contact you unnecessarily about your client's unlodged documents.

Keeping your client list up to date and removing clients who no longer use your services is an important component of managing your lodgment program. It also helps in calculating your on-time lodgment performance more accurately.

Taxpayers with a lodgment prosecution

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/Taxpayers-with-a-lodgment-prosecution/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34568

We use a risk-based approach to managing the compliance obligations of taxpayers. Using this approach, taxpayers who did not meet their previous tax return lodgment obligations and were prosecuted must lodge their future tax returns earlier than those taxpayers who have a good compliance record.

This means taxpayers prosecuted for non-lodgment of a tax return will not be eligible for the lodgment due date benefits in the lodgment program.

Taxpayers who are prosecuted from the month of July to September each year will have a lodgment due date that will be calculated by adding five months to the last day of the month in which the prosecution occurred, unless an earlier lodgment due date applies. These taxpayers will also have their 2021 year's lodgment due date changed to 31 October 2021. For example, a client prosecuted in August 2020 will have a lodgment due date of 31 January 2021 for their 2020 tax return and 31 October 2021 for their 2021 tax return.

Taxpayers prosecuted during the months of October to June inclusive will have their next two year's lodgment due dates changed to reflect the revised lodgment due date of 31 October.

The benefits of the lodgment program will be reinstated if, after two years of being on the revised 31 October or other earlier lodgment due date, such taxpayers have lodged their tax returns on time.

We will advise you of any clients that have a revised lodgment due date.

The agent assessed deferral option does not apply to taxpayers prosecuted for non-lodgment.

Situations where we request earlier lodgment

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/Situations-where-we-request-earlier-lodgment/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34567

The lodgment program is a concession to registered agents and we can request lodgment of a document earlier than the concessional due date, including:

- when there is a history of late or non-lodgment of tax returns
- when there is a history of late or non-payment of liabilities
- as a means of prompting lodgment if there is reason to believe it would be late or not occur
- when a tax return is required for a specific purpose, such as from participants in identified tax schemes.

We may issue a notice requiring lodgment at any time. Letters or notices may also be issued when a document has not been lodged by the latest due date permitted for lodgment. These notices are rarely withdrawn and you should not ignore them as they may indicate that:

- the client is not covered by your program arrangements
- we are undertaking action to secure lodgment.

Lodgment and payment dates on weekends or public holidays

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/Lodgment-and-payment-dates-on-weekends-or-public-holidays/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34577

The lodgment program adopts standard due dates that may fall on a weekend or public holiday. When a due date for lodgment of an approved form or payment of a tax debt falls on a day that is not a business day, you can lodge or pay on the next business day. For the purpose of this rule, 'business day' means a day other than a Saturday, a Sunday or a day that is a public holiday.

A public holiday is defined as a day that is a public holiday for the whole of any state or territory in Australia. This means if a due date falls on a public holiday that is a public holiday for the whole of a state or territory, taxpayers in all states and territories can lodge or pay on the first business day, even if they don't celebrate that public holiday.

Public holiday dates may change during the year. We will review and update these tables with the most current information.

Public holidays and due dates – 2020

Date of public holiday	Name of public holiday	First business day
3 August (Mon)	Picnic Day (NT)	4 August (Tue)
25 September (Fri)	AFL Grand Final Friday (VIC)	29 September (Tue)
28 September (Mon)	Queen's Birthday (WA)	29 September (Tue)
5 October (Mon)	Labour Day (ACT, NSW, SA) Queen's Birthday (QLD)	6 October (Tue)
3 November (Tue)	Melbourne Cup (VIC)	4 November (Wed)
25 December (Fri)	Christmas Day	29 December (Tue)

28 December (Mon)	Boxing Day Holiday Proclamation Day Holiday (SA)	29 December (Tue)
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Public holidays and due dates – 2021

Date of public holiday	Name of public holiday	First business day
1 January (Fri)	New Year's Day	4 January (Mon)
26 January (Tue)	Australia Day	27 January (Wed)
1 March (Mon)	Labour Day (WA)	2 March (Tue)
8 March (Mon)	Eight Hours Day (TAS) Labour Day (VIC) March Public Holiday (SA) Canberra Day (ACT)	9 March (Tue)
2 April (Fri)	Good Friday	6 April (Tue)
5 April (Mon)	Easter Monday	6 April (Tue)
26 April (Mon)	ANZAC Day Holiday (ACT, QLD, SA, WA, NT)	27 April (Tue)
3 May (Mon)	May Day (NT) Labour Day (QLD)	4 May (Tue)
31 May (Mon)	Reconciliation Day (ACT)	1 June (Tue)
7 June (Mon)	Western Australia Day	8 June (Tue)
14 June (Mon)	Queen's Birthday (excluding WA and QLD)	15 June (Tue)

Safe harbour

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Tax-agent-lodgment-program/Safe-harbour/>

- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34570

The safe harbour provisions aim to ensure that services provided to the public by you are of an appropriate ethical and professional standard.

Under the safe harbour provisions, a client will not be liable to certain administrative penalties if they provide all the relevant tax information to you, and you:

- do not take reasonable care and make a false or misleading statement that results in a shortfall amount
- take reasonable care or lack reasonable care and fail to lodge a document by the due date.

The safe harbour provisions can only apply to a:

- false or misleading statement penalty, when the statement is made on or after 1 March 2010
- failure to lodge on time (FTL) penalty, when the document has a due date for lodgment of 1 March 2010 or later.

Safe harbour does not apply where the penalty arises from recklessness or intentional disregard of the tax law by you, nor does it apply to other administrative penalties, including when tax avoidance schemes are involved.

When safe harbour is granted, we may refer the matter to the Tax Practitioners Board to consider whether there has been a breach of the Code of Professional Conduct under the *Tax Agent Services Act 2009*.

See also:

- [Code of Professional Conduct](#)²⁷

Eligibility for safe harbour from FTL penalty

If you lodge a client's return, notice, statement or other document late, they are not liable for an administrative penalty for the late lodgment if both of the following apply:

- They can show they provided you with all relevant tax information to enable you to lodge their return, notice, statement or other document by the due date.
- Failing to lodge the return, notice, statement or other document with us did not result from your intentional disregard or recklessness as to the operation of a tax law.

'All relevant tax information' means all the relevant information to enable you to prepare and lodge the document on time in the approved form. This also means your clients must meet deadlines you specify as their registered agent to provide all the relevant tax information. Relevant tax information also includes a signed document where applicable.

The taxpayer carries the burden of proof to establish that they provided all relevant information as required.

See also:

- [Miscellaneous Taxation Ruling MT 2008/1](#) *Penalty relating to statements: meaning of reasonable care, recklessness and intentional disregard*

Making a request

If your client requests safe harbour

If we apply a FTL penalty, your client can ask for an exemption from the penalty under the safe harbour provisions.

They will have to prove to us that they provided all relevant tax information to you so you could lodge the return, notice, statement or other document with us by the due date. When we assess a safe harbour exemption request, we will contact you for your comment on the claim that the document was lodged late due to your actions.

If you request safe harbour on behalf of your client

As a registered agent, you may request safe harbour on behalf of a client.

If you admit your client provided all their information to you in enough time for you to lodge the document by the due date, we will accept your admission as proof that your client did so. You will also have to explain why you lodged the document late, so we can decide whether or not the safe harbour request will be allowed.

If your client is refused safe harbour

Neither you nor your clients can object to our decision about whether or not to apply safe harbour.

If you are dissatisfied with our decision not to apply the safe harbour, you can seek a review of our decision under the *Administrative Decisions (Judicial Review) Act 1977*.

However, your clients can still seek a remission of penalty regardless of the safe harbour provisions - we will consider if a FTL penalty remission is appropriate in the circumstances.

Disputes between you and your client over FTL penalty safe harbour

Your client must prove they provided you with all the relevant tax information in enough time for you to lodge their document by the due date. If you dispute your client's claims and they cannot provide enough proof, we will not apply the safe harbour.

If one of your former or current clients requests an exemption from FTL penalty, we will notify you and give you the opportunity to comment on their claims.

Lodging your request

To help you lodge your safe harbour requests quickly and easily:

- Use Online services for agents - navigate to Practice Mail, select the Topic Debt and Lodgment and the Subject Cancellation of FTL penalty (Safe Harbour)
- phone us on 13 72 86 Fast Key Code 1 2 2 between 8.00am and 6.00pm AEST, Monday to Friday
- post your request to

Operations – Debt and Lodgment Correspondence
PO Box 327
ALBURY NSW 2640

See also:

- [Interest and penalties](#)
- 'Safe harbour' in [Statements and positions that are not reasonably arguable](#)
- 'Safe harbour' in [Failure to lodge on time penalty](#)
- [Miscellaneous Taxation Ruling MT 2008/1](#) *Penalty relating to statements: meaning of reasonable care, recklessness and intentional disregard*
- [PS LA 2011/19](#) *Administration of penalties for failing to lodge documents on time.*
- For more information about the FTL penalty, including the FTL penalty safe harbour, phone us on 13 72 86 Fast Key Code 1 2 2 between 8.00am and 6.00pm AEST, Monday to Friday.

BAS agent lodgment program 2020–21

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/BAS-agent-lodgment-program/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34553

The BAS agent lodgment program 2020–21 includes:

- lodgment and payment concessions when you have elected on behalf of your client to receive and lodge eligible quarterly activity statements online
- a lodgment concession for pay as you go (PAYG) withholding payment summary annual reports (not the closely held concession)
- lodgment and payment concessions where your client is an active STP reporter and has elected to receive and lodge a paper activity statement.

To ensure your clients receive the full lodgment program concessions, you should lodge activity statements (December monthly, and all quarterly activity statements) using either of the following channels:

- [Online services for agents](#)[↗]
- [Practitioner lodgment service \(PLS\)](#)

On this page:

- [Lodgment and payment due dates](#)
- [Other lodgment obligations](#)
- [If you can't lodge on time](#)

Lodgment and payment due dates

The lodgment program due dates for quarterly activity statements (and December monthly) will now show on your client lists. This is where your client has elected to receive and lodge the activity statement electronically and the activity statement meets the eligibility criteria.

Table 1: BAS agent concessions – monthly lodgment obligation

Monthly lodgment obligation	Due date	BAS agent concession for lodgment and payment if lodging by Online services for agents or PLS
Activity statement	21st of the following month	Not applicable The electronic lodgment and payment concession does not apply to standard monthly activity statements.
December activity statement	21 January	21 February – December monthly business activity statements for business clients with up to \$10 million turnover who report GST monthly and have elected to receive and lodge electronically using a registered agent.

Table 2: BAS agent concessions – quarterly lodgment obligation

Quarterly lodgment obligation	Original due date	BAS agent concession for lodgment and payment if lodging by Online services for agents or PLS
Quarter 4, 2019–20	28 July 2020	25 August 2020
Quarter 1, 2020–21	28 October 2020	25 November 2020
Quarter 2, 2020–21	28 February 2021	Not applicable

Quarter 3, 2020–21	28 April 2021	26 May 2021
Quarter 4, 2020–21	28 July 2021	25 August 2021 To be confirmed when the BAS agent lodgment program 2021–22 is developed.

Other lodgment obligations

Registered BAS agents can also lodge:

- a [PAYG withholding payment summary annual report](#)
- a [super guarantee charge \(SGC\)](#) statement – quarterly form
- a [taxable payments annual report](#)
- payment summaries or income statements, employee termination payments, gross wages, allowances, PAYG withholding and other taxable and non-taxable payroll items
- Single Touch Payroll reports
- a tax file number declaration on behalf of a client
- an application to the Registrar for an Australian business number on behalf of a client.

The scope of services that registered BAS agents can provide to their clients has also been expanded in response to COVID-19. More information can be found on the Tax Practitioners Board website.

See also:

- [BAS services](#)[↗]
- Tax Practitioners Board - [COVID-19 news](#)[↗]

If you can't lodge on time

If you or your clients can't lodge by the lodgment program dates because of exceptional or unforeseen circumstances beyond your or your clients' control, you can request a deferral.

If you request a deferral, you must provide supporting reasons.

See also:

- [Lodgment program deferrals](#)

Managing your lodgment program

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Managing-your-lodgment-program/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34572

The lodgment program helps you manage your workload by allowing you to progressively lodge documents throughout the year.

Find out about:

- [Entities not covered by the program](#)
- [Notify us if lodgment is not required](#)
- [Notifying us when further returns are not necessary](#)
- [Tax agents' personal return lodgment](#)
- [Help with your lodgment program](#)
- [Managing your client list](#)
- [Client declarations and lodgment online](#)

Entities not covered by the program

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Managing-your-lodgment-program/Entities-not-covered-by-the-program/>
- Last modified: 23 Jun 2020
- QC 34571

Your clients cannot be covered by your lodgment program until they have been allocated a registration number appropriate to the document to be lodged.

For tax returns, the registration number is a tax file number (TFN)

For activity statements, the registration number is either:

- an Australian business number (ABN)
- a TFN if an ABN is not applicable.

You need authority to act

Your clients cannot be covered by your lodgment program until they have appointed you as their registered agent.

You can notify us of your authority to act on their behalf using either:

- practitioner lodgment service (PLS) client update transaction
- Add client function in Online services for agents.

Our current systems do not allow more than one agent to be appointed to the activity statement role for a client, so keep this in mind if your client has a tax agent

and a BAS agent to prepare their documents. You can see if an agent already exists for a role in Online services for agents. In these cases, you should make sure your client has provided you the authority to act for them in relation to that particular obligation.

If you are a BAS agent acting for a client on the activity statement role, and you do not receive the latest activity statement, another agent may have been added to that role. To obtain the latest activity statement visit [Online services for agents](#) and add the client to your client list. Your authority to act on behalf of a new client for lodgment purposes only takes effect from when we receive it. To make sure any new clients are covered by your lodgment program for 2020–21, you must successfully lodge the authority with us by the dates in the following table.

Table: Authority to act

Type of authority to act	Must be lodged with us by:
Income tax	31 October 2020 If you accept a new client for income tax purposes after 31 October 2020, check the lodgment due date for the client on your client list from the PLS or Online services for agents. If the new client was previously a self-preparer, they will not be covered by your lodgment program and may need to lodge by an earlier due date.
FBT	21 May 2021

Notify us if lodgment is not required

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Managing-your-lodgment-program/Notify-us-if-lodgment-is-not-required/>
- Last modified: 09 Oct 2020
- QC 34573

If your client is not required to lodge a tax return or FBT return, or has nothing to report in an activity statement for a particular period, advise us before the lodgment due date so we can update our records.

This will keep your client list up to date and avoid unnecessary compliance action that may take place once the document is overdue.

On this page:

- [Tax returns](#)
- [Activity statements](#)
- [Fringe benefits tax returns](#)
- [Super funds](#)

Tax returns

Under certain circumstances, clients who have a tax file number (TFN) may not have to lodge tax returns. To avoid compliance action, and the client being given an earlier lodgment date next year because a tax return is overdue, it is best that you advise us through either:

- a non-lodgment advice using Online services for agents
- the practitioner lodgment service client update transaction.

Return not necessary (RNN) and Further return not necessary (FRNN) advices are also known as non-lodgment advices.

If there are no further returns required, you should lodge an FRNN advice and remove the client from your client list.

See also:

- [Non-lodgment advice](#) – Online services for agents
- [Client update](#) – PLS
- [FBT non-lodgment advice \(registered agents\)](#)

Clients you cannot lodge an RNN advice for

You cannot lodge an RNN advice if the client:

- has been issued with a tax return lodgment demand from us for that income year
- has pay as you go (PAYG) instalment credits for that income year (you can only lodge an RNN if PAYG instalments have been varied or reduced to nil for the full income year)
- is a [superannuation fund](#)
- was, for the 2020 year, either a liable parent or a recipient parent under a child support assessment, unless both of the following apply
 - the client received government benefits for the entire financial year
 - the client's income was less than \$25,575
- has exceeded their superannuation concessional or non-concessional contributions cap(s)
- has an active ABN and is operating a business during that financial year. If they are no longer operating a business, they must meet all their lodgment and payment obligations prior to requesting cancellation of their ABN.

Sometimes an RNN is not required

If any of the following circumstances apply to your client, you do not need to advise us that a return is not necessary:

- they are a newly registered client and have no need for an RNN for years before their registration
- we have already entered an RNN during the selected year because they are
 - Centrelink recipients
 - subsidiary members of a consolidated group and have no requirement to lodge
 - a minor beneficiary.

Activity statements

If your client has nothing to report for a particular period, lodge a nil activity statement by the due date to prevent a demand notice being issued. This includes when the client only has a PAYG withholding obligation and has not had a withholding event during the reporting period.

Note: There are exceptions to the requirement to lodge a nil return. The following forms do not generally have lodgment requirements, and only need to be lodged by the payment due date if varying the instalment amount:

- quarterly PAYG instalment notice (Form R)
- quarterly goods and services tax (GST) instalment notice (Form S)
- quarterly PAYG and GST instalment notice (Form T).

Also, the annual PAYG instalment notice does not generally require lodgment and only needs to be lodged if you are varying the instalment amount or using the rate method to calculate the instalment. It is best to lodge the notice (and, if applicable, pay the instalment) before lodging the tax return if either the:

- required notice must be lodged by 21 October 2020
- taxpayer intends to lodge their 2020 tax return before 21 October 2020.

Lodge nil activity statements in advance

Activity statements can be generated early for your clients in the following cases:

- if they are going to be absent from their place of business before the end of the reporting period and the business will not be trading during that period
- if they are a short-term visitor, for example, an entertainer or sports person and will be leaving the country before generation of the activity statement
- their entity is under some form of administration
- their business has ceased
- they will be travelling (either within Australia or overseas) and therefore will not be able to obtain their activity statement if generated under normal bulk process.

Note: If your client lodges quarterly and they have elected to report and pay monthly, they are not eligible for early generation of activity statements.

Activity statements can be generated for up to six months in advance for either:

- six monthly activity statements
- two quarterly activity statements.

Eligibility requirements

Activity statements can be issued early for all non-elected monthly (that is, if your client is required to report and pay monthly), quarterly and annual lodgers who meet the following eligibility requirements:

- your client has not had an active deferred goods and services tax (DGST) role during the reporting period the request relates to
- generating the statement under normal bulk processes and timeframes will cause difficulties for your client in meeting the lodgment and payment due date
- it is not practical or possible for your client to find alternative lodgment arrangements, and they are either a:
 - June balancer
 - substituted accounting period (SAP) balancer and are requesting early generation of an annual Form I only for PAYGW – go to view the substituted accounting period status.

To request that your client's activity statements be issued early, phone us on 13 72 86.

Fringe benefits tax returns

Under certain circumstances, clients who are registered to pay FBT may not have to lodge an FBT return. If your client's fringe benefits taxable amount during an FBT year is nil, you will need to lodge an FBT non-lodgment advice (registered agents). This will avoid us seeking an FBT return from your client at a later date.

You can use the FBT non-lodgment advice form to advise us that lodgment is not required for multiple years and clients.

The FBT taxable amount may be nil for a range of reasons – for example, because the:

- business ceased
- employee has made contributions
- business no longer provides fringe benefits.

See also:

- [FBT – non-lodgment advice \(registered agents\)](#)
- [Practice mail](#)

Super funds

Australian resident super funds must lodge tax returns, regardless of how much income they receive. If the fund is wound up, you cannot lodge an RNN advice – instead, you must lodge a final return.

Registered tax agents or trustees may be able to advise us of an RNN for certain newly registered SMSFs that meet specific criteria.

See also:

- [Newly registered self-managed superannuation funds – return not necessary](#)

Notifying us when further returns are not necessary

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Managing-your-lodgment-program/Notifying-us-when-further-returns-are-not-necessary/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34552

There are numerous reasons why further returns are not necessary – for example, your client may be:

- an individual who has derived income below the relevant threshold and will remain at this level in future years
- an individual who has retired and whose continuing sole source of income is a full government pension
- a non-individual that ceased operations before the current year of lodgment, such as a company that was deregistered in December 2018.

For the 2020 year, your client must lodge if they were either a liable parent or a recipient parent under a child support assessment, unless both of the following apply:

- They received government benefits for the entire financial year.
- Their income was less than \$25,575.

How to notify us

You can use the practitioner lodgment service (PLS) or Online services for agents to lodge a return not necessary (RNN), also known as a non-lodgment advice, for eligible clients. You can also advise that future returns are not required, unless your client is a super fund.

To notify us, use either the:

- [Client update](#) – PLS
- [Non-lodgment advice](#) – Online services for agents

When further returns are not necessary, we will apply an end date to the client's income tax role in our internal processing system.

If we have issued a lodgment demand you cannot submit a RNN or further return not necessary (FRNN), also known as a non-lodgment advice, online. However, you can post an advice indicating the reasons why a return is not required to:

Australian Taxation Office
PO Box 327
ALBURY NSW 2640

Fringe benefits tax returns

To advise us that an FBT return doesn't need to be lodged:

- complete an [FBT non-lodgment advice \(registered agents\) form](#) and send it to us using Online services for agents Practice mail.

You should notify us as early as possible as processing your FBT non-lodgment advice may take up to 28 days around peak lodgment dates.

We cannot process a non-lodgment notice if either:

- there is a credit on your client's FBT account
- FBT instalments have been paid.

In these circumstances, lodgment of a nil FBT return will allow the credit to be refunded to your client as quickly as possible.

See also:

- [Practice mail](#) – Online services for agents

Tax agents' personal return lodgment

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Managing-your-lodgment-program/Tax-agents--personal-return-lodgment/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34554

To ensure that you receive the lodgment program concession for your own personal tax return, you must use a registered agent number and lodge your tax return electronically. You can view your information on Online services for agents.

If you decide to lodge using your own registered agent number, you must add yourself as a client using the practitioner lodgment service (PLS) or [Online services for agents](#).

To help maintain your privacy, you can restrict who within your practice can access your details in Online services for agents by using Access Manager. Access manager is a stand-alone system used to manage access and permissions for our online services.

If you lodge without a registered agent number, or by paper, you will not be eligible

for any lodgment program due dates available to you as a registered agent.

See also:

- [Meeting your personal tax obligations](#)
- [Access Manager](#)
- [myGovID and RAM for tax professionals](#)

Help with your lodgment program

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Managing-your-lodgment-program/Help-with-your-lodgment-program/>
- Last modified: 09 Oct 2020
- QC 34555

If you are experiencing difficulties meeting your lodgment program for reasons beyond your control, help is available. How we can help depends on whether the difficulties relate to you, your practice, or your clients and if the reasons are in line with [PS LA 2011/15 Lodgment obligations, due dates and deferrals](#).

We take into account your individual circumstances, such as:

- serious illness within your practice or family
- sudden and unexpected staff changes
- natural or other disasters
- COVID-19 impacts.

See also:

- [Support for tax professionals](#)

Short-term support

If you or your clients are experiencing exceptional or unforeseen circumstances that affect your ability to lodge by a due date, [lodgment program deferrals](#) may be available to provide you with short-term assistance.

Longer-term support

If you are experiencing longer-term difficulties meeting your lodgment program, we may be able to help by working with you on a supported lodgment program.

We will assess requests for a supported lodgment program and may direct you back to short-term assistance options if we see that as a better way to continue to manage the issue.

A supported lodgment program requires you to implement solutions that enable your

practice to return to the current lodgment program.

We will work with you to co-develop tailored solutions that can include:

- identifying overdue lodgment obligations, together with current lodgment program commitments
- removing clients that you are not actively managing
- prioritising your practice's overdue and upcoming obligations in a manner that progressively returns your practice to the current lodgment program
- considering lodgment deferrals, or in some instances, suspending compliance action, based on your practice's circumstances.

Generally, we will not offer assistance if the circumstances are of your own making or within your control, or where you have demonstrated an inability to comply with the conditions of a previous supported lodgment program.

Conditions of a supported lodgment program

A supported lodgment program will be subject to the following conditions:

- Before and during the period of our assistance, your own taxation obligations must be kept up to date
- You must take reasonable action to attempt to resolve the issues that have caused you to fall behind with your lodgments
- A supported lodgment program will only apply to clients you are actively representing and any clients you are not actively representing should be removed from your ATO client list
- New clients should generally not be taken on if lodgment of their documents cannot be made on time, or would hinder your ability to meet the supported lodgment program
- You will be required to plan how you will manage your client base and resources following the period of assistance.

We will not consider lodgment deferrals or suspension of lodgment action for clients who have been referred for prosecution action.

Submitting your request for supported lodgment program assistance

To submit your request for assistance through a supported lodgment program, send a request through Online services for agents Practice mail:

- select the topic Debt and Lodgment
- select the subject Supported lodgment program
- include your reasons for requesting assistance in the free text field.

We'll need to know:

- your contact details, including contact name, email address and phone number
- the circumstances that have affected your ability to meet lodgment program dates
- the steps you have taken to resolve these circumstances and the extent to

which they are currently affecting your practice

- the approximate length of time you may need to overcome your current situation.

If you are unable to access our online services to make your request due to exceptional and unforeseen circumstances, phone us on 13 72 86 Fast Key Code 1 3 2 to discuss your circumstances.

See also:

- Online services for agents – [Practice mail](#)

Managing your client list

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Managing-your-lodgment-program/Managing-your-client-list/>
- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 34558

You can use Online services for agents or the Practitioner lodgment service (PLS) to perform a number of useful functions to manage your client lists and lodgment obligations.

On this page:

- [Adding and removing clients](#)
- [Clients who do not have an obligation to lodge – registered tax agents](#)
- [Lodgment status reports](#)

Adding and removing clients

For information about adding a client and how to remove a client from your practice list, including the details you need to update so we no longer contact you about the client, refer to:

- [Add client](#) – Online services for agents
- [Remove client](#) – Online services for agents
- [Client update](#) – PLS.

Clients who do not have an obligation to lodge – registered tax agents

You can use the PLS client update transaction to advise us about a return not necessary (RNN) for a specific year or further returns not necessary (FRNN), also known as a non-lodgment advice, for tax returns for all future years. You can also use Online services for agents to lodge a non-lodgment advice for your eligible

clients.

Lodging an FRNN advice will not remove the registered agent number from the client's records.

You cannot lodge an RNN for regulated super funds as it is compulsory for this entity type to lodge a fund tax return unless it was wound up in a prior year. This function is unavailable in Online services for agents and PLS to ensure that if lodgment does not occur, we will take compliance action.

See also:

- Lodging a [non-lodgment advice](#) in Online services for agents.

Lodgment status reports

You can download various reports to help with your clients' lodgment obligations:

- Practitioner lodgment service
 - Income Tax lodgment status service
 - Activity Statement lodgment *report*.
- Online services for agents
 - On demand reports
 - Income tax lodgment status report

See also:

- [Income tax lodgment status \(ITLDGSTS\)](#) – PLS
- [Activity statement lodgment report \(ASLRPT\)](#) – PLS
- [On demand reports](#) – Online services for agents

Accessing client lists in PLS

You can obtain reports through the PLS, including client lists and due lodgment reports.

See also:

- [Practitioner lodgment service – Reports](#).

Client declarations and lodgment online

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Managing-your-lodgment-program/Client-declarations-and-lodgment-online/>

- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 41425

Each time you lodge an approved form on behalf of your client, the law requires you to have first received a signed declaration in writing from your client. This requirement includes all approved forms such as activity statements and tax returns.

On this page:

- [Requirements](#)
- [Examples](#)

Requirements

Your client is required by law to provide a declaration each time an activity statement or tax return is lodged. They cannot provide a bulk declaration.

The client declaration must state that:

- they have authorised you to lodge the document and
- the information is true and correct.

Your client can choose to provide this declaration by email, fax or in paper form.

Certain requirements must be met when providing a declaration electronically. Sections 9 and 10 of the *Electronic Transactions Act 1999* (ETA) require:

- If information is required to be given in writing it can be given electronically if the person receiving the information consents to receiving it electronically.
- Consent does not have to be explicit and can be inferred from a person's conduct.
- A method that is reasonable is used to identify the person's signature (for example, their email address). If your client chooses to send their declaration by email, they do not need to include their scanned signature. The action of sending the email and the agent accepting the information and then using that as a basis for lodging the approved form would be sufficient to satisfy the electronic signature provisions set out in section 10 of the ETA.
- You consent (noting this can be inferred by your conduct) to your client's signature being sent to you by this method.
- It is not necessary to attach the activity statement or tax return to an email providing the declaration. However, your client can choose to do so. If so, when possible, remove any identifying information to ensure that any sensitive information is not accidentally disclosed if the email is received by a person not authorised.

Your client is required to retain the declaration (or a copy) for up to five years, depending on their circumstances. We recommend you also keep a copy of the declaration for your own records.

The declaration can be stored electronically regardless of whether it was received by email or in paper form. Paper declarations can be scanned and stored electronically.

A streamlined process is in place for Single Touch Payroll.

See also:

- [Single Touch Payroll authorisations](#)

Example of a declaration

I, (name of business client) authorise (name of agent) to give the (specify the period) activity statement to the Commissioner of Taxation for (entity name).

I declare that the information provided for the preparation of this activity statement is true and correct.

I am authorised to make this declaration.

[Insert for emailed declaration] Type full name and date

[Insert for paper declaration] Signed: Date:

Examples

As the following examples show, no matter what method is used:

- a declaration must be given each time you lodge an approved form
- the declaration must be written, for example in an email or letter (a phone conversation is not sufficient)
- the declaration must state that the
 - information provided by the taxpayer is true and correct
 - taxpayer has authorised you to lodge the specified approved form.

Example 1: Cloud computing package

Nick is a tax agent and his client, Jane, uses a cloud-based software accounting package. On 10 August 2019, she provides Nick with authentication details so he can access her business records and lodge her tax return for the 2018–19 income year.

Section 388-65 of Schedule 1 to the *Taxation Administration Act 1953* (TAA) has a number of requirements that must be met. Jane's declaration must:

- be in writing
- state that she has authorised her tax agent, Nick, to give the document to the Commissioner
- declare that the information is true and correct.

Nick must have a declaration in writing from Jane. Section 9 of the ETA allows for information that is to be provided in writing to be provided electronically. This means that Jane can make the declaration electronically.

The declaration must state that Jane has authorised Nick to give the document to the Commissioner. While there is a reasonable argument to infer that the conduct of Jane providing the authentication details would satisfy this, there is a further requirement that Jane must declare that the information is true and correct.

Section 388-70 of Schedule 1 to the TAA requires that Nick's declaration to the Commissioner must state that he has received a declaration from Jane and subsections 388-65(3) and (4) of Schedule 1 to the TAA require that Jane retain the declaration (or a copy) for five years and produce the declaration (or a copy) if requested to do so by the Commissioner within the five years.

If the cloud based software accounting package does not include a field for Jane to provide that declaration then Jane would need to provide a separate declaration to Nick (which could be by fax or email if she chose to do this electronically) stating that the information is true and correct and that Nick is authorised to lodge the document. Jane should ensure that she clearly states which document is being lodged when providing her declaration.

Jane's declaration would say:

I, Jane O'Brien, declare that the information I provided by software accounting package on 10 August 2019 to Nick Lee, tax agent, in relation to the approved form for the period 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 is true and correct and I have authorised Nick Lee to lodge the approved form.

Example 2: Email declaration

Estelle is a tax agent and her client, Ruby, emails her asking her to deal with the ATO on her behalf until otherwise advised.

The statement 'until otherwise advised' is sufficient authorisation for Estelle to act on behalf of Ruby and Estelle does not have to provide this authorisation on each occasion she wanted to contact the ATO on behalf of Ruby.

However, Ruby must provide Estelle with a declaration stating that information is 'true and correct' and that Ruby has authorised Estelle to lodge the approved form on each separate occasion that Estelle lodges an approved form on Ruby's behalf.

Ruby would still need to state on each occasion that Estelle is authorised to lodge the document and the information is true and correct. This could be sent in an email or fax or in writing depending on which option Ruby prefers.

It would not be necessary to include an actual signature at the end of the email. Ruby's action of sending the email and Estelle accepting the information and then using that as a basis for lodging the approved form would be sufficient to satisfy the electronic signature provisions set out in section 10 of the ETA.

Example 3: Declaration sent by separate email

Grace phones Duc, a tax agent, and asks that he deal with the ATO on her behalf until otherwise advised.

Even though Grace has spoken to Duc, she still needs to send the information in writing to him. She sends him an email declaration stating that information is 'true and correct' and that she has authorised Duc to lodge the approved form on her behalf.

While it would be logical for Grace to include the declaration in the email that includes all the information, it is not a legal requirement and if Grace and Duc choose then the declaration could be sent by separate email as long as the relevant approved form was clearly identified.

Example 4: Paper form

Amanda, a tax agent, has a client, William, who provides her with an activity statement as a printed excel spread sheet. Amanda prepares William's activity statement in paper form and posts this to him to check and approve. Once William checks the paper activity statement he signs and returns it to Amanda for lodgment. He has previously provided written authority for Amanda to act on his behalf.

As William has signed a paper activity statement form and has completed the required fields on page two of the activity statement, which includes a signed declaration that the information is true and correct, William has met his client declaration obligations.

If William had not signed the activity statement then he would have to make a separate declaration confirming both that the information is true and correct as well as stating he has authorised Amanda to lodge the document.

The ETA has no application in terms of the interaction between Amanda and

William as this has occurred by paper but it is still open to Amanda to keep a copy of William's declaration electronically if preferred.

If William sent the declaration in an email rather than signing the activity statement, he could have provided Amanda with a separate declaration electronically in which case the ETA would apply to that part of the transaction. Again the declaration should indicate what document William is providing the declaration for.

Example 5: Email

Terry completes his activity statement and then provides information to his tax agent, Anne, by email and states in the email that authorisation to lodge has been provided.

As Terry has signed the declaration at the bottom of page two of the activity statement and the authorisation to lodge has been provided then the requirements of section 388-65 of Schedule 1 to the TAA have been met. Whether the information is faxed or emailed as a portable downloadable file (PDF), the electronic signature provisions would be satisfied.

Example 6: Information in separate emails

Yanni's client, Kate, provides her tax return electronically but doesn't complete the declaration field and then sends a separate email advising that the tax return she sent previously is true and correct. Kate has met the requirements for 'true and correct' however the declaration has not been sufficiently specified. It would not be enough to state that the tax return sent previously is true and correct. That could refer to any tax return Kate sent previously and it needs to be more specific, by, for example, referring to the year of the tax return or the date of the previous email.

See also:

- Sections [388-65](#) and [388-70](#) of schedule 1 to the *Taxation Administration Act 1953*
- [Section 9](#)¹³ and [Section 10](#)¹³ of the *Electronic Transactions Act 1999*

Lodgment program deferrals

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Lodgment-program-deferrals/>
- Last modified: 14 Apr 2021
- QC 34580

Exceptional and unforeseen circumstances may impact your ability to lodge by a due date on behalf of your clients and a lodgment deferral may help.

You can submit a deferral request by completing the current online application and lodging through Online services for agents.

Find out about:

- [How lodgment deferrals work](#)
- [Agent assessed deferrals](#)
- [ATO assessed deferrals](#)
- [Deferrals for new or re-engaged clients with overdue returns](#)
- [Lodgment deferral tips](#)
- [ATO assessed payment deferrals](#)

How lodgment deferrals work

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Lodgment-program-deferrals/How-lodgment-deferrals-work/>
- Last modified: 14 Apr 2021
- QC 34581

Exceptional or unforeseen circumstances may affect your ability to lodge by a due date on behalf of your clients and a lodgment deferral may help. You can submit a deferral request by completing the current online application and lodging it through Online services for agents (OSFA).

Lodgment deferrals extend the due date for lodgment of a document. They provide additional time to lodge without incurring a failure to lodge on time (FTL) penalty.

While it may take more time to process your requests at peak times, we generally approve deferral requests, unless special circumstances apply.

On this page:

- [Agent assessed lodgment deferrals now include payment deferral](#)
- [Eligibility for deferrals](#)

- [Deferrals for new or re-engaged clients with overdue returns](#)
- [Applying for deferrals](#)
- [Our decision](#)

Agent assessed lodgment deferrals include payment deferral

Approved agent assessed deferral requests will have an automatic payment deferral to the deferred lodgment due date. This does not apply to:

- individuals and trusts – payment will be due 21 days after the issue of the notice of assessment of the deferred return
- FBT returns – payment will be due on 25 June if return lodged via the practitioner lodgment service, or 21 May if return lodged by paper.

Next step:

- [Agent assessed deferrals](#)

Eligibility for deferrals

You don't need to request a deferral if either of the following apply:

- The lodgment or payment due date falls on a weekend or public holiday – lodgment or payment may be made the next business day.
- The due date is 15 May for income tax returns, as a further extension of time to lodge and pay to 5 June is already provided in the concessional lodgment program.

You cannot request a deferral from the 5 June concessional lodgment date because it is not a due date under the lodgment program.

You may not need to request a deferral if you are affected by a general or geographical issue that prevents you from lodging on time. Examples include natural disasters and widespread system outages. In these instances, we will inform you that you do not need to make your own deferral request.

You can request a lodgment deferral for:

- tax returns
- fringe benefits tax returns
- monthly and quarterly activity statements
- annual GST returns
- PAYG payment summary annual reports
- taxable payments annual reports.

We will continue to monitor agents' lodgment performance and use of deferrals. We may contact those who have higher levels of non-compliance or are high users of deferrals to understand the reasons for the requests.

Lodgment deferral requests for large businesses

Lodgment deferral requests for significant global entities or large business, including excise taxpayers, will be considered by our large business specialists. You may be contacted by them if you request a lodgment deferral for one of these entities.

Lodgment deferral requests for large withholders should not be submitted via OSFA. Instead, contact our large business support team to discuss your client's circumstances.

See also:

- [Large business support](#)
- [When to pay and report on activity statements – large business](#)

Deferrals for new or re-engaged clients with overdue returns

If you engage a client with overdue tax returns, you can make a request for additional time to lodge their overdue returns.

We can provide you with a deferral for your client's current year return. We will also consider delaying activities to secure lodgment on the overdue prior year returns.

This deferral type applies only to tax returns.

Next step:

- [Deferrals for new or re-engaged clients with overdue returns](#)

Applying for deferrals

Before you submit a request

Make sure your request is consistent with:

- [PS LA 2011/15](#) *Lodgment obligations, due dates and deferrals*
- [PS LA 2011/14](#) *General debt collection powers and principles*.

There are three types of lodgment deferrals:

- agent assessed deferrals
- ATO assessed deferrals – requests that do not meet the criteria for agent assessed deferrals
- new or re-engaged clients with overdue returns.

We aim to process your request quickly. However, during peak lodgment periods it may take up to 28 days to finalise requests. We generally approve deferral requests unless special circumstances apply.

Common errors that delay processing are:

- not using the current application form – use either an *Agent assessed deferral*, an *ATO assessed deferral* or *Deferrals for new or re-engaged clients with*

overdue returns application form

- not completing the application in full – include all relevant information to streamline the process
- not attaching the form to a secure mail message online.

When submitting a request for deferral:

- save a copy of the form in Excel format and attach it to the appropriate secure mail message
- list multiple clients on a single form, however you must lodge separate deferral request forms for each lodgment obligation type listed.

See also:

- [Lodgment deferral tips](#)

Our decision

Most requests for deferral will be approved and processed. You will receive notification in OSFA. Your deferred due dates will show in:

- OSFA
- practitioner lodgment service client report.

However, if we:

- don't have all the necessary information to process your request, we may contact you
- decline or vary your request, you will receive notification in OSFA.

A deferral request may be declined if:

- the client has a record of late lodgments, including poor compliance with deferred due dates
- we have commenced lodgment compliance action with your client
- you are not listed on our systems as the authorised agent to act on the client's behalf
- you request a deferral from the 5 June concessional lodgment date.

A lodgment deferral request for a significant global entity or large business, including large withholder or excise payer, may be declined by our large business specialists. If so, you will be notified by them.

Agent assessed deferrals

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Lodgment-program-deferrals/Agent-assessed-deferrals/>
- Last modified: 19 Mar 2021

- QC 35431

The circumstances for your deferral request must meet the requirements of [PS LA 2011/15 Lodgment obligations, due dates and deferrals](#). If you are experiencing exceptional or unforeseen circumstances, agent assessed deferrals are available.

Approved agent assessed deferral requests automatically extend the payment due date to the deferred lodgment due date, where applicable. It does not apply:

- to FBT returns where the payment due date remains as 25 June for returns lodged online, or 21 May if returns are lodged by paper
- if the lodgment is for individual tax returns or trust returns as these have a payment due date 21 days after the issue of the notice of assessment.

Individual, trust and partnership substituted accounting period (SAP) clients are eligible for agent assessed deferrals. Company and super fund SAP clients will need to request an ATO assessed deferral.

Lodgment deferral requests for large businesses

Lodgment deferral requests for significant global entities or large business, including excise taxpayers, will be considered by our large business specialists. You may be contacted by them if you request a lodgment deferral for one of these entities.

Lodgment deferral requests for large withholders should not be submitted via Online services for agents (OSFA). Instead, contact our large business support team to discuss your client's circumstances.

See also:

- [Large business support](#)
- [When to pay and report on activity statements – large business](#)

On this page:

- [Lodgment obligations](#)
- [Timeframes for agent assessed deferrals](#)
- [Due dates for agent assessed deferrals](#)
- [Submitting your request for an agent assessed deferral](#)
- [After you submit your request](#)

Lodgment obligations

Agent assessed deferrals can be used to request lodgment deferrals for the following.

Table 1: Lodgment deferrals available for agents

	Tax	BAS
--	-----	-----

Lodgment obligation	agents	agents
Tax (IT) returns – except large and medium entities due on 15 January	Yes	No
Tax (IT) returns – substituted accounting period (SAP) clients – except companies and super funds	Yes	No
FBT returns	Yes	No
Monthly and quarterly activity statements – except quarterly PAYG and GST instalment notices form R, S and T or annual PAYG instalment notice form N	Yes	Yes
Annual GST return	Yes	Yes
PAYG payment summary annual report	Yes	Yes

Next step:

- Complete the [Agent assessed deferral](#) application form.

Timeframes for agent assessed deferrals

Agent assessed deferrals have defined timeframes allowed, depending on the obligation type. If you need a deferral for a longer period than specified, you must lodge an [ATO assessed deferral](#) request.

Table 2: Timeframes for agent assessed deferrals

Obligation type	Maximum timeframe
Annual	28 days
Quarterly	21 days
Monthly	14 days

Due dates for agent assessed deferrals

An agent assessed deferral request must be lodged no later than three business days after the lodgment due date specified in the lodgment program.

Tax returns due 15 May are already provided with a concessional lodgment and payment date of 5 June. The 5 June date is not available for agent assessed deferrals as it is not a lodgment due date under the lodgment program.

Submitting your request for an agent assessed deferral

To apply for an agent assessed deferral, submit your application through OSFA:

- complete and save the [Agent assessed deferral application](#) in Excel format and attach it to the appropriate mail message
- select the appropriate topic based on the obligation included in the request
- select the subject Agent assessed deferral.

If you are submitting a second lodgment deferral request for the same obligation, you should use the ATO assessed deferral request form.

If your large withholder client needs additional time to lodge, phone our large business support team on 1300 728 060 to discuss their circumstances.

After you submit your request

Processing may take up to 28 days around peak lodgment dates. Do not resend a further deferral application for the same clients within the 28-day processing period. This could cause possible delays to the processing of your original request.

When your request has been processed, or is varied or declined, you will receive notification through OSFA.

Deferred due dates for eligible clients will display on our systems, within a period of time that allows for system processing.

ATO assessed deferrals

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Lodgment-program-deferrals/ATO-assessed-deferrals/>
- Last modified: 02 Feb 2021
- QC 34574

As a registered agent, you can apply for an ATO assessed deferral if your deferral request does not meet the agent assessed deferral criteria.

On this page:

- [Lodgment obligations](#)
- [Making a request](#)
- [Submitting a request](#)
- [After you submit your request](#)
- [If you are not satisfied with our decision](#)

Lodgment obligations

ATO assessed deferrals can be used to request lodgment and payment deferrals for the following

Lodgment obligation	Tax agents	BAS agents
Tax returns	Yes	No
FBT returns	Yes	No
Monthly and quarterly activity statements; except quarterly PAYG and GST instalment notices form R, S and T or annual PAYG instalment notice form N	Yes	Yes
Annual GST return	Yes	Yes
PAYG payment summary annual report	Yes	Yes
Taxable payments annual report	Yes	Yes

Making a request

You can lodge an ATO assessed deferral application if:

- you do not meet the agent assessed deferral criteria
- your request exceeds the agent assessed deferral timeframes
- you are submitting the application after the lodgment due date
- this is for a second or subsequent deferral request
- your client has had a lodgment prosecution resulting in a revised lodgment date
- there are exceptional or unforeseen circumstances beyond your or your client's control, which require a full explanation.

The exceptional or unforeseen circumstances must be consistent with those outlined in [PS LA 2011/15 Lodgment obligations, due dates and deferrals](#).

We can only consider your deferral request if you provide full details of:

- why you are submitting the request after the lodgment due date
- the exceptional or unforeseen circumstances
- why you are requesting a payment deferral, if you need one.

Lodgment deferral requests for large businesses

Lodgment deferral requests for significant global entities or large business, including excise taxpayers, will be considered by our large business specialists. You may be contacted by them if you request a lodgment deferral for one of these entities.

Lodgment deferral requests for large withholders should not be submitted via Online services for agents (OSFA). Instead, contact our large business support team to discuss your client's circumstances.

See also:

- [Large business support](#)
- [When to pay and report on activity statements – large business](#)

Next step:

- Complete the [ATO assessed deferral](#) application form.

Submitting a request

To apply for an ATO assessed deferral, submit your application through OSFA:

- complete and save the ATO assessed deferral application in Excel format and attach it to the appropriate mail message
- select the appropriate topic based on the obligation included in the request (select topic Debt and lodgment for the *Taxable payments annual report*)
- select the subject ATO assessed deferral (select subject ATO assessed deferral Taxable payments annual report for the *Taxable payments annual report*).

If your large withholder client needs additional time to lodge, phone our large business support team on 1300 728 060 to discuss their circumstances.

After you submit your request

Processing may take up to 28 days around peak lodgment dates. Do not resend a deferral application for the same clients within the 28-day processing period. This could cause possible delays to the processing of your original request.

When your request has been processed, or is varied or declined, you will be notified through OSFA.

Deferred due dates for eligible clients will display on our systems within a period of time that allows for system processing.

If you are not satisfied with our decision

If you have lodged an ATO assessed deferral and we've varied or declined it and you are dissatisfied with our decision, you can lodge a *Review of deferral decision* form to request an informal review.

Request a review of deferral decision

If you request a review of deferral decision, your request must:

- be lodged within 21 days from the date on the communication varying or declining your original request

- be on the current application form and lodged as an attachment to a mail message through OSFA
- include the form submitted in portable document format (PDF)
- quote your receipt identification number (ID) and the date on the communication varying or declining your original request
- contain additional information to support your original request.

If your deferral request was not accepted because it was not lodged through Online services for agents, do not lodge a *Review of deferral decision* form. You must lodge a new deferral application form.

Lodgment deferral requests for a significant global entity or large business, including large withholder or excise payer, are reviewed by our [large business specialists](#). If your request was declined, you can contact them to discuss your circumstances.

Next step:

- Complete the [Review of deferral decision](#) application form.

Submit your request for a review of deferral decision

You can submit your application form through Online services for agents:

- complete and save the [Review of deferral decision form](#)
- select the topic General questions, problems and help
- select the subject Review of decision for deferrals from tax agents
- attach your review of deferral decision request form to the message.

After you submit your request

You will receive notification through Online services for agents on the outcome of your review.

Processing may take up to 28 days around peak lodgment dates. Do not resend an application within the 28-day processing period. This could cause possible delays to the processing of your request.

If you are dissatisfied with this decision you may apply to have the decision formally reviewed by the Federal Court or the Federal Magistrates Court under the *Administrative Decisions (Judicial Review) Act 1977*.

Deferrals for new or re-engaged clients with overdue returns

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Lodgment->

[program-deferrals/Deferrals-for-new-or-re-engaged-clients-with-overdue-returns/](#)

- Last modified: 01 Jul 2020
- QC 47906

If you have existing clients or engage new clients (including previous clients) with one or more years of overdue tax returns to lodge, remember that only the current year tax return is included in the Lodgment program on-time performance measurement.

Your on-time lodgment performance will only be affected if you lodge the current year return after the due date or deferred due date.

On this page:

- [Eligibility](#)
- [Submitting a request](#)
- [After you submit your request](#)

Eligibility

You can request additional time to lodge your client's overdue returns. We can provide you with a deferral for your client's current year return, and will also consider delaying activities to secure lodgment on the overdue prior year returns.

The period of additional time allowed for both the deferral and the delaying of action on overdue prior year lodgments is 42 days (six weeks) from the date of request.

If you need more than six weeks or your client has outstanding obligations that are not tax returns, use the ATO assessed deferrals process.

You can only use the [Deferrals for new or re-engaged clients with overdue returns application form](#) to request lodgment deferrals for tax returns, where the client's lodgment due date is 31 October. You can list multiple clients on a single form.

Submitting a request

To apply for additional time to lodge for new or re-engaged clients with overdue returns, submit your application through Online services for agents:

- complete and save a copy of the [Deferrals for new or re-engaged clients with overdue returns application form](#) in Excel format and attach it to the appropriate mail message
- select the topic Income tax
- select the subject New or re-engaged client deferral.

Do not include additional supporting information in the message.

If you need more than six weeks to lodge overdue returns, use the ATO assessed deferrals process.

Example

In January 2020, Stephen is approached by a new client with overdue prior year income tax returns for 2016, 2017 and 2018. The 2019 income tax return was due on 31 October 2019.

Stephen requests additional time to allow him to complete and lodge the overdue prior and current year returns on the *Deferrals for new or re-engaged clients with overdue returns* application form.

Stephen is granted a deferral for the 2019 return for 42 days from the date of his request, and is able to lodge the current year return on time.

The ATO also agrees to cease activities to secure the overdue prior year returns for the same time period, while Stephen brings the client up to date.

Stephen's client is still liable for any late lodgment penalties and interest that are applicable for his overdue 2016, 2017 and 2018 returns.

After you submit your request

Processing may take up to 28 days around peak lodgment dates. Do not resend a further application for the same clients within the 28-day processing period. This could cause possible delays to the processing of your original request.

When your request has been processed, varied or declined, we will notify you of our decision through Online services for agents.

Deferred due dates for eligible clients will display in our systems, within a period of time that allows for system processing.

Lodgment deferral tips

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Lodgment-program-deferrals/Lodgment-deferral-tips/>
- Last modified: 14 Apr 2021
- QC 65290

You can help us respond more quickly to your lodgment deferral request:

- Do not phone us to request a deferral as we cannot accept your deferral requests over the phone.
- Download the current [online application form](#) for the appropriate deferral type.
- Complete all the required information starting from the top of the form

- Select either Tax or BAS agent from the drop-down menu to enable the appropriate options in other drop-down menus.
- Supply sufficient information to support your application where a reason is requested.
- Original due date is the initial Lodgment program due date. If the obligation was previously deferred, the original due date does not change.
- Deferred due date is the date you are now asking to lodge your client's obligation.
- ICAC Account is the three-digit number included in your clients' activity statement account.
- Period end date relates to the year, quarter or month end of the obligation, for example, a March quarterly activity statement has a quarter end date of 31 March.
- Select the practice mail topic and subject for the obligation type, for example, Income tax - Agent assessed deferral.
- If you receive an error message when attempting to send attachments with '.xlsx' file type via practice mail, save the file as 'Excel97-2003 Workbook (*.xls)' before attaching to your practice mail message.
- Once you submit the request, do not send further requests for the same client within the 28-day processing period.

If you have difficulties managing your lodgment program due to circumstances beyond your control, we can help with longer-term support.

See also:

- [How lodgment deferrals work](#)
- [Deferral forms for registered agents](#)
- [Help with your lodgment program](#)

ATO assessed payment deferrals

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Lodgment-program-deferrals/ATO-assessed-payment-deferrals/>
- Last modified: 24 Sep 2020
- QC 62240

Exceptional and unforeseen circumstances may impact your clients' ability to pay their tax on time. You can apply for a payment-only deferral for eligible obligations including:

- income tax
- fringe benefits tax
- excise payments.

You should use one of our existing deferral types if your client needs a:

- lodgment-only deferral
- lodgment and payment deferral.

You cannot request a payment-only deferral for the following forms:

- Quarterly PAYG instalment notice (Form R)
- Quarterly GST instalment notice (Form S)
- Quarterly GST and PAYG instalment notice (Form T)
- Annual PAYG instalment notice (Form N).

See also:

- [Additional support during COVID-19](#)

Apply for payment deferral

To apply for a payment-only deferral, use the ATO assessed payment deferral application form. A separate form must be completed for each client unless your client is linked to another entity. Submit your application through Online services for agents using the following steps:

- Complete [ATO assessed payment deferral application form](#) including detailed information to allow us to accurately assess the request. Insufficient information could lead to a delay in processing your request.
- Save the ATO assessed payment deferral application (in Excel format)
- Open a New mail message
- Select the topic Debt and lodgment
- Select the subject ATO assessed deferral
- Select the appropriate option in the Enquiry type drop-down menu
- Attach the completed ATO assessed payment deferral application form
- Select the declaration then select Send.

After you submit your request

Processing may take up to 28 days. Do not resend a deferral application for the same clients within the 28-day processing period. This could cause possible delays to the processing of your original request.

When your request has been processed, or is varied or declined, you will be notified through Online services for agents.

Deferred due dates for eligible clients will display on our systems within a period of time that allows for system processing.

Find out about:

- [ATO assessed deferrals](#)
- [How lodgment deferrals work](#)

Pre-filling service

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Pre-filling-service/>
- Last modified: 28 May 2020
- QC 34103

The pre-filling service helps to ensure the accuracy of your clients' tax returns. It allows you to cross-check information provided by your clients with information we have obtained from various organisations. We also have other information you can use to complete your clients' tax returns, including data from previous years.

The [2020 pre-filling](#) information is available in the pre-filling report through both:

- Online services for agents
- practitioner lodgment service (PLS) if you are using [Standard Business Reporting](#) [☞] (SBR)-enabled software
 - PLS will return the same data as the Online services for agents pre-filling report with some exceptions. PLS includes myDeductions.

Find out about:

- [About pre-filling](#)
- [Missing information and discrepancies](#)
- [Recurring data issues](#)
- [Pre-filling reports](#)

See also:

- [Pre-filling of returns](#) – practitioner lodgment service
- [Pre-fill availability](#)
- [myDeductions](#)

Log in to Online services for agents

About pre-filling

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Pre-filling-service/About-pre-filling/>
- Last modified: 28 May 2020

- QC 44694

Pre-filling data is available for tax returns from 1 July as we receive it, with substantial amounts available by mid-August. You can generally access this information shortly after we receive it.

You can access pre-filling reports from 2009 to the current income year. These can be viewed online and printed by accessing the pre-filling report using the secure [Online services for agents](#) system under [Reports and forms](#).

Pre-fill information for your clients is also available through the practitioner lodgment service (PLS) if you are using [Standard Business Reporting](#)²⁷ (SBR)-enabled software. This will return the same data as the Online services for agents pre-filling report with some exceptions. PLS includes myDeductions.

We provide information about your clients' income and expenses as reported by various organisations. Additional information is available to help complete your clients' tax returns, including tax return data from previous years.

See also:

- [Pre-filling reports](#)

On this page:

- [Timing of pre-filled information](#)
- [The pre-filling report](#)
- [Printing the pre-filling report](#)

Timing of pre-filled information

Information providers, such as employers, financial institutions, health funds and other government agencies must report specific information to us by certain statutory dates, for example:

- PAYG payment summary information must be submitted by 14 August
- Single Touch Payroll (STP) reporters must make a finalisation declaration, or alternatively provide a payment summary, by 14 July each year (employers who start STP reporting in the 2019–20 financial year will have until 31 July 2020)
- annual investment income report information must be submitted by 31 October.

We ask information providers to:

- provide information to us as close to 1 July as practicable
- lodge their information electronically.

The pre-filling report

Note: Do not rely solely on pre-filled information. The information provided may be incomplete because of:

- timing – an organisation has not supplied data yet or our processing has not

been completed

- matching – we could not match the data to your client
- validation – the data did not pass all processing checks.

The pre-filling report can be:

- viewed online
- viewed in a spreadsheet, where you can add or amend data as required
- imported directly into your tax management software if it is part of your software capability.

You can:

- review pre-filled data
- amend pre-filled data if necessary (information providers must send us updated data if there has been an error)
- add any missing income details.

Printing the pre-filling report

You can enable the printing of background colours and images so the report will print as it displays on screen, including the coloured headings:

- In Internet Explorer 9.0 and later
 - select the Tools button in Internet Explorer > Print
 - go to Page Setup
 - check the boxes Print Background Colours and Images and Enable Shrink-to-fit.
- In Mozilla Firefox 8.0 and later
 - select the Open Menu in Firefox > Print
 - go to Page Setup
 - select the tab Format & Options. Check the box Print Background (colours and images) and Shrink to fit Page Width.

If you have difficulties with the View and Print Online option, check the browser settings on your computer. The report opens in a new browser window, known as a pop-up. Many browsers are set to block pop-ups.

See also:

- [Online services for agents user guide](#)

Missing information and discrepancies

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Pre-filling-service/Missing-information-and-discrepancies/>
- Last modified: 28 May 2020
- QC 44695

Not all information is available through the pre-filling service. Information such as rental income cannot be supplied by us. Pre-filling information may be incomplete if:

- an organisation has not supplied data yet
- we could not confidently match the information to your client's record
- the information did not pass all data quality checks.

Inconsistent personal details held by other organisations can result in incomplete pre-fill information. Your clients should ensure they have provided their current and correct personal details (such as their name, date of birth and tax file number (TFN) where relevant). They should make sure these details are the same for all government agencies.

Clients with a 'restricted access' or 'security assessed' status on our systems (such as high profile taxpayers) will not have pre-filled information available.

Discrepancies or errors

Your client may not recognise some of the information provided in the pre-fill report. For example, they may be unfamiliar with an amount of interest. This is commonly caused by:

- interest bearing securities reported by share registries rather than a bank
- bank accounts or investments that have been overlooked by an investor
- bank accounts or investments that have been established on behalf of your client, but are unknown to them.

If you don't understand or agree with the pre-fill data:

- check your client's records or statements to find the cause of the discrepancy
- ask your client to clarify the discrepancy with the information provider. The provider must correct the information with us if there has been an error
- check current data issues for updates on identified pre-filling data issues for the current income year
- check [recurring data issues](#) for details about data issues affecting multiple years.

If your client needs the full account details to query an amount with a third-party provider, or the shareholder registration number (SRN) or holder identification number (HIN) number for their investment accounts, they can phone us on 13 28 61.

Pre-filling does not alter your responsibility to provide a complete and correct tax return for your client.

If we audit a lodged return, we may consider whether the taxpayer or their agent had accessed pre-filling information that they chose to omit from the return when

applying any penalties or interest.

See also:

- [Current data issues](#)
- [Recurring data issues](#)

Contact us

We prefer you to contact us online using Practice mail in Online services for agents. Select:

- new Mail message
- topic Income tax
- subject Pre-filled tax return data incorrect.

Recurring data issues

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Pre-filling-service/Recurring-data-issues/>
- Last modified: 28 May 2020
- QC 44696

We are aware of recurring data issues to multiple year pre-filling reports. The following issues are common to pre-filling reports for multiple years:

- [Calculating ATO interest](#)
- [Interest from non-formal trust accounts](#)
- [Non-individual investment income](#)
- [Managed fund data reporting discrepancies](#)
- [Multiple or duplicated payment summaries or income statements](#)
- [Reportable employer super contributions on payment summaries or income statements](#)
- [HELP and other income contingent loan debts](#)

Calculating ATO interest

We currently provide the ATO interest data in the pre-filling report for individual taxpayers.

Year to date interest summary report – all entities

Previously, you may have used the *Year to date interest summary report* (YTD report) available on the Online services for agents to complete your client's tax return. The YTD report is not intended to be used for this task as it does not accurately capture ATO interest data for the purpose of declaring deductions or

assessable interest income. We have revised the interest descriptions so that they describe the nature of the interest being reported.

If you need help working out ATO interest deductions and income, see [ATO interest – calculation and reporting](#).

Pre-filling report – individual taxpayers

The report sources ATO interest amounts from the income tax, fringe benefit tax (from 2018) and integrated client accounts (ICA).

In the following situations, you may need to assess your clients' circumstance and adjust the interest amounts reported accordingly.

Recoupments of interest charged

When we report interest remission and credit adjustments as assessable income we assume your client has claimed a deduction for interest that we imposed. If they have not claimed a deduction and the period for requesting an amendment of their return to claim the deduction has lapsed, they do not have to claim the interest income. You may need to adjust the interest totals we have provided.

Change in residency status

We report interest paid by the ATO on the basis of your client's residency status when the interest data is extracted from their account at the end of the financial year. If they were a non-resident at the date of extraction, no interest paid data will be provided.

If they were a non-resident when we paid the interest, then we should have withheld tax from that payment. If this is the case you don't have to declare this interest in their income tax return. If tax was not withheld, you will need to declare the interest as income at item 10 Gross interest.

You may need to adjust the interest totals we have provided to remove or add the interest paid by the ATO. See Examples 5 and 6 in [ATO interest – calculation and reporting](#).

Movement of transactions across ICA

We move transactions across accounts to undertake a number of administrative actions (for example, to isolate pre and post-bankruptcy transactions; to isolate amounts that are in dispute). When a transaction is moved between accounts, the process date is reported as the date the transaction was moved. This means interest previously reported may be reported again in a later pre-fill report. We have revised our business rules to prevent this duplication for 2018 and later years. You may need to adjust the interest totals we provide for the 2017 and prior years if your clients' accounts contain moved transactions.

You should check your clients' statements of account and other source documents to ensure the pre-fill data reflects their specific circumstance before lodging their tax return.

2016 and later income years

For the 2016 and later income years, we introduced a new way of capturing and reporting general interest charge, shortfall interest charge and late payment interest. This new process helps reduce the complexities that affected the calculation of ATO interest in prior years. You may need to make adjustments to the 2016 pre-fill data, as this was the transition year for the new process.

We haven't changed how we calculate or report interest on early payment (IEP), interest on overpayment (IOP), or delayed refund interest (DRI).

If you choose not to rely on the new pre-fill reporting method, you will need to manually calculate your client's interest amounts using their statement of account.

In some circumstances, we may not provide pre-fill data but will display a message that the client has interest. In this case you will need to manually calculate the deductions or income amounts, using either the new or previous reporting method.

See also:

- [ATO interest – calculation and reporting](#)

2015 income year and prior

ATO interest totals are not provided in the Pre-filling reports for the 2013 and prior income years. A message will display advising that the client has ATO interest on their account.

You will need to refer to your client's statement of account to manually calculate ATO interest.

The 2015 Pre-filling report was changed to a static report from 9 November 2015. This means any interest transactions processed on your client's account after 9 November 2015 that impact interest totals in 2015 or an earlier year, will not be included in the Pre-filling reports for those years. This means you may need to make adjustments to the pre-fill data. Refer to [ATO interest – calculating and reporting](#) for information about how to account for any discrepancies.

Interest from non-formal trust accounts

This affects years 2009 to 2020 inclusive.

Interest from non-formal trust accounts, such as children's bank accounts, may be matched to the trustee (parent).

Non-formal trust accounts with entity type 'I' (for individuals) are included for the pre-filling service. If the parent name forms part of the account name the record may be matched to the parent name. This is regardless of whether the parent's tax file number (TFN) is attached to the account. The provision of this income allows you to work out whether the income needs to be declared in your client's tax return.

Exclusions

For discrepancy identification purposes, non-formal trust accounts with the following words are excluded:

- '<Trustee name> ATF <beneficiary name>' if single trustee
- '<Trustee name and Trustee name> ITF <beneficiary name>' where multiple trustees.

Letters should not be sent to trustees of children's bank accounts where these name formats are used, although it may sometimes happen.

Non-individual investment income

This affects years 2009 to 2020 inclusive.

An individual client's pre-filling report may show an amount of investment income that belongs to a linked non-individual, such as a superannuation or trust fund.

This normally occurs if the entity's investment account has been established incorrectly. The interest or dividend income from these accounts will be incorrectly mapped to the individual client's record in our systems if their linked entity account has been established with either of the following:

- the individual's personal TFN quoted
- an entity type 'I' that is for an individual account.

Correct the record for the future

To prevent these records showing on future reports, ask your client to contact their financial institution to ensure the correct:

- TFN is quoted on the account
- entity type is listed on the account, for example, the correct entity type for a formal trust account is 'T', and for super accounts is 'S'.

This will not change what currently appears in the report unless the information provider sends us a replacement report.

Managed fund data reporting discrepancies

This affects years 2009 to 2020 inclusive.

Your client's pre-filled managed fund data may be different to the statement they receive from their managed fund.

We have found discrepancies between the information fund administrators send to their clients and the information they report to us for pre-filling.

This is an issue due to ongoing inconsistencies between the:

- standard distribution statement

- tax return and the reporting specifications.

The lead times that funds and digital service providers need to make changes to their systems can also contribute.

Tax agents have advised that even if this data is incorrect, they prefer to see it in the pre-filling report because it prompts them to closely check their clients' statements.

Which amount to use

If the pre-filled information doesn't match your client's statement, use the information the managed fund provided to your client. Contact the managed fund if you have any questions.

Multiple or duplicated payment summaries or income statements

This affects years 2009 to 2020 inclusive.

Multiple payment summaries or income statements may display in the pre-filling report, for example if your client has worked for the same employer for multiple periods during the year.

If the employer or payer has reported amended payment summaries or income statements to the ATO and has provided your client with an amended payment summary, income statement or letter, our processing systems for post-lodgment data matching should identify the correct payment summary or income statement.

However, the pre-filling report may show both the original and amended payment summaries or income statements.

This can occur when:

- an employer or payer has lodged a subsequent payment summary or income statement, such as an amendment, and not reported it correctly
- the pre-filling system has been unable to accurately match the replacement record against the original record. This may also be the result of some accounting software.

The pre-filling report displays the dates of all records to assist you to identify the correct record.

What your client should do

If your client disputes the records displayed in the pre-filling report, they will need to raise this with their employer or payer.

Reportable employer super contributions on payment summaries or income statements

This affects years 2009 to 2020 inclusive.

Employers may incorrectly include other amounts, such as super guarantee payments, as reportable employer super contributions (RESC) in the payment summary or income statement.

Reportable employer super contribution amounts can impact eligibility for some tax offsets. It can also result in Medicare levy surcharge being applied, affect eligibility for Centrelink benefits, and alter child support assessments.

Before lodging your client's tax return, you or your client should contact the employer to check that the payment summary or income statement figure is correct if both the following apply:

- your client's paper or pre-filled payment summary or income statement information includes an amount for RESC
- your client does not salary sacrifice super.

If the amount is incorrect, the employer must issue an amended payment summary or income statement to your client and any other affected employees. If they have already lodged their payment summary annual report with us, they must also lodge an amended annual report.

HELP and other income contingent loan debts

This information will assist in understanding the amount we pre-fill for:

- Higher Education Loan Program (HELP)
- Vocational Education and Training student loan (VSL)
- Student Financial Supplement Scheme (SFSS)
- Trade Support Loan (TSL)
- Student Start-up Loan (SSL)
- ABSTUDY Student Start-up Loan (ABSTUDY SSL).

The repayable balance provided by pre-filling may be different to your client's account balance. The repayable balance does not include new debts until they become repayable. There is a lead time between when the debt is incurred and when it becomes repayable.

Indexation is applied to repayable amounts each year on 1 June.

The pre-fill amount displayed includes the repayable balance at 1 June, less any repayments made after that date.

If the pre-fill request is made between:

- 1 January and 31 May of the current year – the repayable balance will only include debts incurred up to (but not including) 1 January of the previous calendar year.
- 1 June and 31 December of the current year – the repayable balance will only include debts incurred up to (but not including) 1 January of the current calendar year. Detailed statements can be obtained on request.

Prior year amounts

If the pre-fill request is for an outstanding prior year return, the repayable amount is shown as at the date the pre-fill request is made. This means if a pre-fill request is made for a prior year return, the current repayable loan balance is shown and will be the repayable amount regardless of the income year of the return.

Pre-filling reports

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Tax-professionals/Prepare-and-lodge/Pre-filling-service/Pre-filling-reports/>
- Last modified: 28 May 2020
- QC 44697

You can access pre-filling reports from 2009 to the current year in both:

- Online services for agents
- practitioner lodgment service (PLS) if you are using [Standard Business Reporting](#) (SBR)-enabled software.

For details about the information available in pre-filling for a specific year, select the relevant income year report below.

Find out about:

- [Pre-filling 2020](#)
- [Pre-filling 2019](#)
- [Pre-filling 2016–18](#)
- [Pre-filling 2012–15](#)
- [Pre-filling 2009–11](#)

See also:

- [Pre-filling service](#)

Our commitment to you

We are committed to providing you with accurate, consistent and clear information to help you understand your rights and entitlements and meet your obligations.

If you follow our information and it turns out to be incorrect, or it is misleading and you make a mistake as a result, we will take that into account when determining what action, if any, we should take.

Some of the information on this website applies to a specific financial year. This is clearly marked. Make sure you have the information for the right year before making decisions based on that information.

If you feel that our information does not fully cover your circumstances, or you are unsure how it applies to you, contact us or seek professional advice.

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