

CHINA TAX ALERT

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Updates on health insurance products qualified for preferential IIT treatment

Regulations discussed in this issue:

- *Notice on Pilot Admin Measures on the Health Insurance Products Qualified for Individual Income Tax Preferential Treatments, Bao Jian Fa [2015] No.82, issued by the China Insurance Regulatory Commission on 10 August 2015*

Background

The China Insurance Regulatory Commission (CIRC) issued *Bao Jian Fa [2015] No. 82 ("Circular 82")*, introducing pilot administrative measures for health insurance products which will qualify for preferential individual income tax (IIT) treatment ("IIT-preferential health insurance policies") as prescribed in the *Notice on Individual Income Tax Treatment on Commercial Health Insurance (Cai Shui [2015] No.56)*.

Circular 82 became effective 10 August, 2015.

Main features

Circular 82 makes it clear that IIT-preferential health insurance policies are those commercial health insurance products issued in accordance with Circular 82 and purchased by individuals in the pilot cities. Life insurance companies and their affiliates (collectively called insurance companies) which engage in the business of IIT-preferential health insurance policies should satisfy the requirements as stated in Circular 82. The CIRC will shortly release a list of the qualified insurance companies and update the list regularly.

Circular 82 elaborates on the types of insurance policies which qualify for preferential IIT treatment, and introduces detailed administrative measures for these policies, including:

- IIT-preferential health insurance policies should provide universal health coverage comprising a medical insurance component and a personal accumulation account. The medical insurance component should be linked to the basic medical insurance and supplementary medical insurance administered under the China social insurance schemes and is to be used to cover personal medical expenses incurred in excess of those covered by the basic and supplementary medical insurances. Personal medical expenses can only be claimed once. The accumulated balance in the personal account can only be used for purchasing commercial health insurance products and covering personal medical expenses after retirement.

- IIT-preferential health insurance policies developed by insurance companies should be marked as "个人税优健康保险" and reported to the CIRC for approval.

Insurance companies should issue receipts designed specifically for IIT-preferential health insurance policies to policyholders as proof for IIT deduction after receiving insurance premiums.

In addition, Circular 82 provides specific administrative measures on the financial management, information system management, information disclosure and supervision of insurance companies.

KPMG Observations

Cai Shui [2015] No.56 provides that taxpayers in the pilot cities who earn income from the following sources will be eligible to claim a tax deduction against the respective categories of assessable income, an amount of the premium they pay for qualified commercial health insurance products:

- wage and salary
- remuneration for providing services
- production or business operations conducted by self-employed households
- contracted or leased operations of enterprises or social service providers partly or wholly funded by state assets.

A cap of RMB2,400 per year (or RMB200 per month) has been set as the maximum amount of tax deduction in respect of the relevant premiums paid.

Circular 82 has clarified the criteria for those health insurance policies which will qualify for preferential IIT treatment in the pilot cities and has sped up the implementation of policies on commercial health insurance products qualified for preferential IIT treatment..

We expect that qualified insurance companies will gradually roll out a batch of IIT-preferential health insurance policies to the market in the near future. Employers should keep a close watch on the list of qualified insurance companies to be announced by the CIRC, and make informed decisions on selecting appropriate commercial health insurance products for their employees in order to utilise the preferential tax treatment and optimise the remuneration package.

KPMG recommends companies confirm the "个人税优健康保险" status of commercial health insurance policies when selecting IIT-preferential health insurance policies for their employees, and obtain IIT-preferential health insurance receipts from the insurance company for IIT deduction purposes.

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