

GMS Flash Alert

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South Africa – 2024 Tax Filing Season

On Friday, 31 May 2024, the South African Revenue Service (SARS) published a notice in the Government Gazette (No. 50741) listing the persons who must submit and persons who are not required to submit tax returns, as well as the periods within which the tax returns are due, for the 2024 year of assessment (period 1 March 2023 to 29 February 2024).

A subsequent correction to the notice was issued by SARS on 7 June 2024 (Government Gazette No. 50770), replacing the references to the tax thresholds amounts for natural persons to the amounts as legislated for the 2024 tax year.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Taxpayers, their employers, and tax service providers should be mindful of the filing deadlines for the 2024 tax filing season. Taxpayers should be proactive about document collection, information gathering, and working towards their compliance deadlines, whether they are responsible for their own return completion and filing or are working with a tax service provider.

Also, as we note in this newsletter, SARS will ‘auto-assess’ a large swathe of taxpayers, using data that they have received from third parties, such as employers, financial institutions, etc. Such returns should be reviewed and verified. Corrective action may be necessary if taxpayers are not in agreement with their auto-assessed forms.

Submission Due Dates for Filing 2024 Tax Returns

The 2024 tax filing season opens on Monday, 15 July 2024.¹ The SARS submission due dates are as follows:

- For non-provisional taxpayers, on or before Monday, 21 October 2024; and
- For provisional taxpayers, on or before Monday, 20 January 2025.

Natural Persons Who Must Submit a 2024 Tax Return

Subject to the exclusions listed for taxpayers who are not required to submit a return (see below), taxpayers with gross income exceeding the following thresholds must submit a return:

- ZAR 95,750 (under the age of 65 at the end of the year of assessment)
- ZAR 148,217 (65 years or older but under 75 at the end of the year of assessment)
- ZAR 165,689 (75 years or older at the end of the year of assessment).

Additionally, the Government Gazette lists specific categories of income streams, funds held, or assets owned, that may trigger a requirement to submit a return; for example, carrying on a trade, capital gains and losses exceeding ZAR 40,000, funds held in a foreign currency, or assets owned outside South Africa with a total value exceeding ZAR 250,000.

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Taxpayers with these types of income streams/investments should consult the Government Gazette for more information.

Other Instances

A natural person who is requested by the Commissioner in writing to furnish a return, irrespective of the amount of income or nature of receipts or accruals of the person, must submit a return.

Natural Persons Not Required to Submit a 2024 Tax Return

Although natural persons may have to register for income tax, they will not be required to submit an income tax return if one or more of the below criteria are met:

- 1 The gross income of that natural person consists solely of one or more of the following:
 - Remuneration income, other than a lump-sum benefit as referred to below, received from one employer for the full tax year, which:
 - does not exceed ZAR 500,000;
 - does not include any taxable allowances and/or taxable benefits; and
 - the amount has been correctly subjected to employees' tax.
 - South African-sourced interest (other than interest from a tax-free investment) not exceeding:
 - ZAR 23,800 in the case of a person below the age of 65 years at the end of the year of assessment; or
 - ZAR 34,500 in the case of a person aged 65 years or older at the end of the year of assessment;
 - Dividends that are exempt from normal tax where the recipient was a nonresident throughout the 2024 year of assessment;
 - Amounts received or accrued from a tax-free investment; and
 - A single lump sum received from a pension or provident fund, pension preservation fund, provident preservation fund, or retirement annuity fund, and tax has been deducted or withheld in accordance with a directive issued by the Commissioner.

2 The above does not apply to a natural person who:

- intends to claim any additional allowable deductions, such as medical expenses, retirement annuity contributions, and/or travel expenses; or
- was granted a taxable fringe benefit; or
- received/accrued any amount in respect of services rendered outside South Africa.

3 Accurate and complete automatic assessments:

- When the Commissioner issues a natural person with an automatic assessment and the declarations reflected on the assessment are complete and correct as at the date of the assessment based on an estimate to give effect to automatic assessment.

Channels for the Submission of an Income Tax Return and Document Retention

Natural persons must submit an income tax return either electronically by using the SARS eFiling platform, provided that the person is registered for eFiling, or through the assistance of a SARS official at a SARS office. SARS may agree that the natural person may submit the tax return in an alternative manner.

It should be noted that SARS may request supporting documents to verify the information declared in an income tax return. In terms of the *Tax Administration Act No. 28 of 2011*, taxpayers are required to keep all supporting documents to their tax returns for a period of five years.

Changes to Automatic Assessments

Should a taxpayer agree with the automatic assessment issued by SARS, no further action is required by the taxpayer, i.e., there is no need to accept the assessment. Should a refund be due, it will be paid into the taxpayer's bank account provided that the taxpayer's banking details with SARS are correct. If a taxpayer has a tax liability owing to SARS, the payment should be made to SARS before the payment due date.

To the extent that the taxpayer is not in agreement with the automatic assessment issued, the taxpayer will have until the stipulated filing due date to prepare and file a tax return. In the case of automatic assessments issued by SARS after the filing due date, the taxpayer will have 40 business days to prepare and file a tax return, calculated from the date of the notice of assessment.

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Pre-Tax Filing Season Considerations and Automatic Assessments

During the period leading up to the official start of the 2024 tax filing season, the pre-populated data reflected on a taxpayer's income tax return may not be accurate and complete as SARS may still be in the process of populating data received from all sources. In some cases, SARS may have limited access to certain third-party information that may impact the disclosure in a taxpayer's tax return.

During the period between 1 and 14 July 2024, SARS will be issuing automatic assessments for a large number of taxpayers, based on third-party data collected. Therefore, it is recommended that taxpayers not accept the automatic assessment without a thorough review thereof or consultation with their tax practitioner.

FOOTNOTE:

1 See [Government Gazette/Staatskoerant](#) Vol.707, 31 May/Mei 2024, No. 50741 and [Government Gazette/Staatskoerant](#) Vol.708, 7 June/Junie 2024, No. 50770.
For more information, see "[Tax Season](#)" on the SARS website.

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RELATED RESOURCE

This article is excerpted, with permission, from "[South Africa: 2024 tax filing deadlines for individuals](#)," (11 June 2024), a publication of the KPMG International member firm in South Africa.

ZAR 1 = GBP 0.043
ZAR 1 = USD 0.054
ZAR 1 = EUR 0.05
ZAR 1 = INR 4.51

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