

Talk Tax – Tax Amnesty – Waiver of Penalties

FS: Can you clarify what this stream of amnesty is about and what is the aim of such amnesty program?

CEO: The Minister for Finance, Honorable Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum in his 2016 National Budget Address on 6 November 2015 had announced Tax Amnesty by Fiji Revenue & Customs Authority (FRCA) for waiver of penalties imposed to all taxpayers who have lodged outstanding returns, that were due to have been lodged by 1 November 2015, and make applicable tax payments by 31st December 2015. In other words, this stream of Tax Amnesty is a limited-time opportunity for our taxpayers to update all their tax filing with applicable tax payments in exchange for forgiveness of all administrative penalties without any prosecution.

The aim of this tax amnesty program is to provide relief to taxpayers from the burden of penalties and to assist those who face genuine financial difficulties to take this opportune time in updating their records with FRCA.

FS: What penalties are covered and will be waived under this tax amnesty?

CEO: The penalties that may be waived or remitted are: Late lodgment penalty; Late payment penalty; Failing to maintain proper record; Breach for possession agreement; and Insufficient Advance Payment Penalty (IAPP).

FS: What penalties are not covered under this tax amnesty?

CEO: This amnesty will not cover penalties on assessments raised after 1 November 2015 and penalties imposed under Section 46 of Tax Administrative Decree (TAD) which is the Audit Penalties.

FS: How long will this Amnesty be available?

CEO: This stream of Amnesty Program is only from 6th November to 31 December 2015. All returns must be filed and taxes payable be paid within this period.

FS: Who will process the applications for this Amnesty?

CEO: For this amnesty, there are no applications but the outstanding returns lodged will be processed by the Tax Amnesty Unit (TAU). Whilst the tax return is being processed you must continue with your payment of tax liability – lump sum or by installment to pay-off the principal tax liability excluding penalties by 31 December 2015.

FS: Where can you lodge your Waiver of Penalty Amnesty Tax Returns?

CEO: You can lodge your tax returns at any FRCA Customer Enquires Centers Fiji wide. All returns lodged under the Amnesty Program will be stamped “**TAX AMNESTY**”. You can always get your copy stamped as well for your records. For those who wish to mail it should be sent to the Tax Amnesty Admin Committee (TAAC), Fiji Revenue & Customs Authority, Private Mail Bag, Suva.

FS: What are the conditions for waiving penalty under this Lodgment and Payment Amnesty?

CEO: Full waiver of penalties will be granted to taxpayers that lodge and pay their taxes in full before the end of 31 December 2015. You need not wait for a Notice of Assessment from FRCA. Whilst filing out the Tax returns, you will calculate the tax liability and therefore you just have to pay the same amount with lodgment of the tax returns (VAT, Income Tax, STT, PAYE, FBT, etc)

FS: Any other advice on the 2015 Tax Amnesty that you would like to share?

CEO: Information from taxpayers will be treated with strict confidence. There will be no remission of late lodgment and payment penalties from 1st January 2016. Help us to help you from your tax burden. Those that will be caught after the amnesty period will be subject to the full brunt of the law. Taxpayers are urged to take advantage of the Amnesty Program to avoid penalties. For further information you can call the Tax Amnesty Unit (TAU) on 3243988 or 3243816 or our toll free line on 0800 3304925. You are also welcomed to email your queries to taxamnesty@frca.org.fj .