



Working together in response to the impacts of COVID-19

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Media-centre/Articles/Working-together-in-response-to-the-impacts-of-COVID-19/>
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Working together in response to the impacts of COVID-19

As the Australian community confronts the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis, you will have seen impacts to your clients and your own business. We know you are working hard to support your clients while dealing with the impacts to your own business.

These are trying times, and we at the Australian Taxation Office (ATO), Tax Practitioners Board (TPB) and your professional associations are committed to supporting you through this difficult period.

The [Commissioner has highlighted](#) that tax professionals have always been a vital part of Australia's tax and super systems. Now, as we work together in response to the impacts of COVID-19, our partnership is more important than ever. We all play an essential role in helping the community respond to this crisis and supporting our clients.

As you know, the intent of the Government's relief measures is to help the economy withstand and recover from the economic impact of COVID-19 by supporting businesses to manage cash flow challenges and retain employees.

Some advisors may be grappling with the tax consequences associated with the stimulus payments, and wondering what will attract our attention. We also know that some businesses are already making changes to their business structures and employment arrangements following the stimulus announcements.

We ask that tax agents and businesses be mindful that it is not acceptable to backdate or artificially change a business structure or employment arrangements, including changing the characterisation of payments, in order to obtain a benefit or

payment that would not otherwise have been paid. The ATO and TPB will take firm and swift action should this be the case.

We understand these situations can be difficult to navigate and we encourage anyone who needs advice to seek assistance from us. If you become aware of someone doing the wrong thing, report them to the [TPB](#)^[2] or the [ATO](#). All reports will be treated in the strictest confidence.

As trusted guardians of the tax and super systems, we all have an important role to play in helping Australia overcome these challenges. The best way forward is for all of us to work together to ensure the Government measures are applied in accordance with their intent. We are committed to supporting you during this difficult time, and ask that you support all Australians in the conduct of your practices.

Thank you.

Jeremy Hirschhorn
Second Commissioner
Client Engagement
Australian Taxation Office

Ian Klug AM
Chair
Tax Practitioner Board

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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