Part III - Administrative, Procedural, and Miscellaneous

Relief with Respect to Employment Tax Deadlines Applicable to Employers Affected by the Ongoing Coronavirus (COVID-19) Disease 2019 Pandemic

Notice 2020-65

On August 8, 2020, the President of the United States issued a Presidential Memorandum directing the Secretary of the Treasury (Secretary) to use his authority pursuant to section 7508A of the Internal Revenue Code (Code) to defer the withholding, deposit, and payment of certain payroll tax obligations.[1] Accordingly, the Secretary has determined that employers that are required to withhold and pay the employee share of social security tax under section 3102(a) or the railroad retirement tax equivalent under section 3202(a) are affected by the COVID-19 emergency for purposes of the relief described in the Presidential Memorandum and this notice (Affected Taxpayers). For Affected Taxpayers, the due date for the withholding and payment[2] of the tax imposed by section 3101(a), and so much of the tax imposed by

[1] The Presidential Memorandum is available at https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2020-17899.

[2] The deposit obligation for employee social security tax does not arise until the tax is withheld. Accordingly, by postponing the time for withholding the employee social security tax, the deposit obligation is delayed by operation of the regulations. Thus, this notice does not separately postpone the deposit obligation.

section 3201 as is attributable to the rate in effect under section 3101(a), on Applicable Wages, as defined herein, (collectively Applicable Taxes) is postponed until the period beginning on January 1, 2021, and ending on April 30, 2021.

Applicable Wages

For purposes of this notice, Applicable Wages means wages as defined in section 3121(a) or compensation as defined in section 3231(e)[3] paid to an employee on a pay date during the period beginning on September 1, 2020, and ending on December 31, 2020, but only if the amount of such wages or compensation paid for a bi-weekly pay period is less than the threshold amount of $4,000, or the equivalent threshold amount with respect to other pay periods. The determination of Applicable Wages is made on a pay period-by-pay period basis. If the amount of wages or compensation payable to an employee for a pay period is less than the corresponding pay period threshold amount, then that amount is considered Applicable Wages for the pay period, and the relief provided in this notice applies to those wages or that compensation paid to that employee for that pay period, irrespective of the amount of wages or compensation paid to the employee for other pay periods.

Payment of Deferred Applicable Taxes

An Affected Taxpayer must withhold and pay the total Applicable Taxes that the Affected Taxpayer deferred under this notice ratably from wages and compensation

[3] Because Applicable Wages are defined as wages as defined in section 3121(a) and compensation as defined in section 3231(e), any amounts excluded from wages or compensation under these sections are not included when determining Applicable Wages.

paid between January 1, 2021 and April 30, 2021 or interest, penalties, and additions to tax will begin to accrue on May 1, 2021, with respect to any unpaid Applicable Taxes. If necessary, the Affected Taxpayer may make arrangements to otherwise collect the total Applicable Taxes from the employee.

Drafting Information

The principal authors of this notice are attorneys of the Office of Associate Chief Counsel, Employee Plans, Exempt Organizations, and Employment Taxes, with the participation of staff from other offices. For further information regarding the guidance under this notice, please call the Notice 2020-65 Hotline at (202) 317-5436 (not a toll-free number).