

Solidarity Budget and COVID-19 support measures

Key highlights - last updated 7 April 2020

Mr Heng Swee Keat, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, delivered the Solidarity Budget on 6 April 2020, the day before the COVID-19 circuit breaker measures commenced. This was the third budget in recent months which builds on and reinforces the earlier Unity and Resilience Budgets. It addresses the rapidly evolving COVID-19 situation and the impact on Singapore's economy and society. Our summary of the Unity Budget is available [here](#).

The Solidarity Budget mobilises another S\$5.1 billion of government funds, taking us over the S\$60 billion mark, and utilises reserves that the nation had saved for that rainy day to combat the fall-out from what is already a mighty storm, and which is still brewing.

The Solidarity Budget continues where the Resilience Budget left off by building on and enhancing a number of the announcements from the Unity Budget to provide support to businesses in these extraordinary times. There was a clear focus on preserving jobs for Singaporeans, helping enterprises overcome immediate challenges such as cash-flow and rental costs, and finally on strengthening economic and social resilience so that Singapore can emerge at the end of this crisis, intact and stronger.

We have summarised the key highlights from the Resilience and Solidarity Budgets for our clients and hope everyone stays safe in these uncertain times. In addition, the Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore (IRAS) has issued new COVID-19 support measures and tax guidance. Please visit the [COVID-19 Hub](#) on our website, where we will continue to share the relevant materials.

We have put in place business continuity plans which means that we are available to continue to support our clients through these difficult times.



Tax topic

Stimulus package

Enhanced Jobs Support Scheme

Employers will receive a 25% cash grant on the first SGD 4,600 of gross monthly wages (excluding employer Central Provident Fund (CPF) contributions) of each local employee on their CPF payroll. A local employee is a Singapore Citizen or Singapore Permanent Resident.

No application for this is required. The Solidarity Budget also announced that this 25% cash grant will increase to 75% on the first SGD 4,600 of gross monthly wages for the month of April only to offset the disruptions arising from the mandatory closure of premises for non-essential businesses.

Table 1: JSS Tranches

	JSS will cover wages paid in:	CPF contributions for the relevant months must be made by:	JSS will provide support of:	JSS will be paid out by:
Tranche 1 (Enhanced)	October - December 2019	14 February 2020	25% (75% for the month of April) of the first \$4,600 of gross monthly wages per local employee	End-April 2020 (brought forward by the Solidarity Budget)
Tranche 2 (New)	February - April 2020	14 May 2020		End-July 2020
Tranche 3 (New)	May - July 2020	14 August 2020		End-October 2020

Higher payouts are available for employers in Aviation and Tourism (75% rather than 25% cash grant) and Food Services (50% rather than 25%). More information can be found [here](#).

So, for example, if you have 100 local employees throughout the JSS entitlement period all earning above SGD 4,600 a month, then you could receive:

Tranche 1: $\text{SGD } 4,600 * 25\% * 100 * 2 + \text{SGD } 4,600 * 75\% * 100 = \text{SGD } 575,000$.

Tranche 2: $\text{SGD } 4,600 * 25\% * 100 * 3 = \text{SGD } 345,000$

Tranche 3: $\text{SGD } 4,600 * 25\% * 100 * 3 = \text{SGD } 345,000$

Total: $\text{SGD } 1,265,000$

The enhanced JSS payment of 75% for April 2020 will be paid at the end of April 2020. It will be calculated by reference to the October wage bill and will be adjusted based on the wage change, joiners and leavers in April 2020 when calculating the JSS for Tranche 2. More information can be found [here](#).

This payment is to defray staff costs, thus, according to IRAS, it is a taxable receipt.

Extended filing extensions

Tax Type	Original Filing Deadline	Extended Filing Deadline (New)
Income Tax for Individuals (including sole proprietors and partnerships)	18 April 2020	31 May 2020
Please note that Grant Thornton Singapore has already extended the filing deadline for its individual clients (including those where assistance is provided by the employer) to 30 June 2020 to file their YA2020 tax return.		
Income Tax for Trusts, Clubs and Associations	15 April 20	31 May 2020
Estimated Chargeable Income (ECI) for companies with Financial Year ending Jan 2020	30 April 2020	31 May 2020
GST Returns for accounting period ending Mar 2020	30 April 2020	11 May 2020
S45 Withholding Tax Forms due in Apr 2020	15 April 2020	15 May 2020
Tax Clearances for foreign employee in Apr 2020	-	1 additional month

Taxpayers who can file earlier should continue to do so.

Deferral of corporate income tax payment

All companies with corporate income tax payments that are due in April, May and June 2020 will be granted an automatic three-month deferral of these payments. The payments that are deferred from April, May and June 2020 have to be paid in July, August and September 2020 respectively.

Companies on GIRO may view their revised installment plans at myTax Portal in early May 2020. Companies who are not on GIRO can use the Corporate Tax Payment Deferment Calculator to check the extended payment due date, which is 3 months from the usual payment due date. For example, a Notice of Assessment dated 1 April 2020 which is typically due on 2 May 2020 will now be due on 1 August 2020.

Please see the attached link for the Corporate Tax Payment Deferment Calculator. <https://www.iras.gov.sg/Calculator>

Deferral of Personal Income Tax (PIT) for employees

Some employees who have already filed their YA 2020 tax return, will have received their Notices of Assessment. These employees may opt to defer their income tax payments due in May, June and July.

If the employee is paying their PIT in one lump sum, they may opt to defer the payment for three months if it was due in May, June or July 2020.

If the employee is paying their PIT by GIRO, they may opt to defer the income tax payments due in May, June and July 2020. Therefore, there will be no GIRO deductions in these three months, and GIRO will resume in August and the end-date of the instalment plan will correspondingly be extended for 3 months. The amount of income tax payable will remain the same.

Employees can opt for this deferment in the following link: <https://form.gov.sg/5d5ce149c0a8230012d27118>. For further information, please see <https://www.iras.gov.sg/irashome/Individuals/Locals/Paying-your-taxes-Claiming-refunds/Defer-Tax-Payment-for-Individual-Income-Tax/>.

Deferral of Personal Income Tax (PIT) for Self-Employed Persons (SEP)

No application is required for this.

The deadline for SEPs to file their Year of Assessment (YA) 2020 PIT remains at 18 April 2020 if they file electronically. SEPs will be automatically granted a three-month deferral of their PIT payment due in May, June and July 2020.

For SEPs paying their PIT in one lump sum, their payment will be deferred from May, June or July by three months to the respective August, September or October 2020.

For SEPs paying their PIT by monthly GIRO, the initiative effectively grants a pause on the individual's GIRO payments for May to July, and payments will restart in August 2020 and thus the instalment plan will be extended by 3 months. The amount of income tax payable remains the same.

Instalment plan for YA 2020, with the deferment, is as follows:

	May 2020	Jun 2020	Jul 2020	Aug 2020	Sep 2020	Oct 2020	Nov 2020	Dec 2020	Jan 2021	Feb 2021	Mar 2021	Apr 2021	May 2021	Jun 2021	Jul 2021
Prior to Resilience Budget announcement	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100			
With changes announced in Resilience Budget				\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100

The deferment eases an individual's cash-flow needs for May, June and July 2020.

Foreign Worker Levy	<p>To help firms that hire foreign workers on work permits and S-passes, the monthly foreign worker levy due in April will be waived.</p> <p>Employers will also receive a foreign worker levy rebate of S\$750 from levies paid this year, for each work permit or S pass holder. This should be paid as early as Apr 21.</p>
COVID-19 Support Grant	<p>The Government will introduce a new COVID-19 Support Grant to support individuals who have lost their jobs as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. The grant provides financial assistance while these individuals find a new job or attend training. Successful applicants will receive a monthly cash grant of \$800, for three months.</p> <p>Further details can be found here.</p>
Enhanced Care and Support package	<p>The Government will further enhance the Care and Support Package that was announced during Budget 2020. This will provide further assurance and support to Singaporeans who are concerned about coping with their household expenses during this period of exceptional economic uncertainty. All adult Singaporeans will benefit, with more help given to the less well-off.</p> <p>Further details can be found here.</p>
Enhanced Property Tax (PT) Rebate	<p>Non-residential properties will be granted an enhanced rebate for PT payable for the period 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020. Laws will be passed to ensure that owners pass on PT rebates to tenants.</p> <p>Further details can be found here.</p>
Rental Waiver for tenants in Government owned/ managed non-residential facilities	<p>To help alleviate costs for businesses located in Government-owned / managed non-residential facilities, the following tenants will qualify for rental waivers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Stallholders of Hawker Centres and Markets. b) Commercial Tenants. c) Other Non-Residential Tenants. <p>Further details can be found here.</p>
Providing Sector Specific Support	<p>The Government has announced sector specific support for the Aviation, Tourism, Land Transport, Maritime and Arts and Culture sectors.</p> <p>Further details can be found here.</p>
Tax residence of a company due to travel restrictions during COVID-19	<p>Due to travel restrictions, where a company is not able to hold its Board of Directors meetings in Singapore, the IRAS will consider the company as a Singapore tax resident for Year of Assessment (YA) 2021, provided it meets all the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the company was a Singapore tax resident for YA 2020; b. there are no other changes to the business model of the company and its mode of operations in FY 2019 and FY 2020; and c. the directors of the company have attended the Board meeting held outside Singapore, or if the meeting is held via electronic means (e.g. via video-conferencing, tele-conferencing, etc.) due to the directors being temporarily restricted in their travel as a consequence of COVID-19. <p>Where a company is not a tax resident of Singapore for YA 2020 and has to hold its Board meeting in Singapore in 2020 due to travel restrictions , IRAS will consider the company as a non-resident for YA 2021, provided there are no other changes to the business model of the company and its mode of operations in FY 2019 and FY 2020.</p> <p>A company is required to keep the relevant documentation and records (e.g. board minutes stating why the directors were attending board meetings from their respective locations), and to provide the relevant information to IRAS upon request to support its tax residency claim.</p>

<p>Determination of permanent establishment (PE) during COVID-19</p>	<p>Due to travel restrictions, employees of a foreign company may have to remain in Singapore. Such unplanned presence will not result in the creation of a permanent establishment in Singapore for the foreign company, provided all the following conditions are met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> the foreign company did not have a permanent establishment in Singapore for YA 2020; there are no other changes to the business model of the company and its mode of operations in FY 2019 and FY 2020; the unplanned presence of the employees in Singapore is due to travel restrictions relating to COVID-19 and their physical presence in Singapore is temporary (as a guide, generally not more than 183 days in year 2020 from the date of first arrival in Singapore); and the activities performed by the employees during the unplanned presence would not have been performed in Singapore if not for the travel restrictions. <p>A company is required to keep relevant documentation and records and to provide the relevant information to IRAS upon request to support its no PE position.</p>
<p>Tax implications of Singaporeans / Singapore Permanent Residents working remotely on overseas employment contract from Singapore during COVID-19</p>	<p>Singaporeans/Singapore Permanent Residents exercising overseas employment who are now working remotely from Singapore for that employment will not be considered to be exercising that employment in Singapore for the period from the date of his /her return to Singapore to 30 September 2020, provided that the following conditions are met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> there is no change in the contractual terms governing the employment overseas before and after the employees return to Singapore; and this is a temporary work arrangement due to COVID-19. <p>If all the above conditions are met, the employment income of the individual for the employment exercised in Singapore as discussed above will not be taxable in Singapore. The 30 September 2020 date will be reviewed by the IRAS to take into consideration of the evolving COVID-19 situation.</p> <p>If the above conditions are not met, normal tax rules will apply to determine the taxability of the employment income for work done in Singapore.</p>
<p>Tax implications of non-resident foreign employees with extended stay in Singapore during COVID-19</p>	<p>Non-resident foreign employees who have to extend their stay in Singapore due to the travel restrictions will not be treated as exercising an employment in Singapore for the period of the extended stay, if the following conditions are met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> the period of the extended stay is for a period of not more than 60 days; and the work performed during the extended stay is not connected with the original business assignment/trip in Singapore and would have been performed overseas if not for COVID-19 travel restrictions. <p>If all the conditions are met, the employment income for the period of the extended stay in Singapore will not be taxable. Normal tax rules will apply to determine the taxability of the employment income for the period of the extended stay in Singapore, if any of the conditions is not met.</p>

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