

Federal Tax Authority Opens Registration for Tax Agents and Tax Accounting Software Vendors

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The Tax Agent Register

Created to meet the requirements of compliance with value added tax, the Tax Agent's post is a new profession to the local market and is expected to attract high demand from professionals working in accounting and legal services.

Who Can Be a Tax Agent?

The Tax Agent must be of good conduct and behaviour, never having been convicted of a crime or misdemeanour prejudicial to honour or honesty, irrespective of whether or not he may have been rehabilitated. He/she must hold a certified Bachelor or Master degree in tax, accounting or law from a recognised educational institution. If the applicant holds a Bachelor degree in any other field, he/she may submit a tax certification from an internationally recognised tax institute.

Applicants must also provide a certification of relevant and recent experience of at least three years in either tax, qualified accounting or law, and a certificate proving their verbal and written communication skills in both Arabic and English. Furthermore, they must pass the Authority's Tax Agent exam, provide a medical fitness certificate, as well as a copy of the liability insurance contract against professional errors. Candidates are to carry out their activity through a legal person licensed by the competent authorities.

"At the Federal Tax Authority, we seek to set clear criteria for Tax Agents to help them carry out their mission of building strong relationships between the Authority and taxable persons in the country. Tax Agents will be the mediators between the FTA and Taxable Persons in the UAE; they will be directly responsible for all of their obligations and rights," said FTA Director-General His Excellency Khalid Al Bustani.

"As a new profession in the local UAE labour market, the FTA's conditions, qualifications and accreditation requirements for Tax Agents will set a benchmark for other businesses to follow while hiring for tax-related positions. These criteria will also work as a catalyst for the development of new job skills to meet the new employment opportunities that will result from implementing the tax system in the UAE," H.E. Al Bustani added.

The Federal Tax Authority shall establish a special register for Tax Agents to file all matters pertaining to their job. No individual is permitted to practice the profession of Tax Agent without completing the registration and receiving accreditation from the FTA, as well as a license from the competent authorities .

Any individual may appoint a Tax Agent to act on their behalf before the Federal Tax Authority with regards to their tax matters. The Authority will not deal with any Tax Agent representing a Person, should said Person inform the FTA of the termination or dismissal of the Tax Agent. If and when

requested by the FTA, the Tax Agent is required to provide the Authority with all information, documents, records and data required for any Person he/she represents. The Authority shall then have the right to inspect these records for taxation purposes with said Agent.

Conditions to Register as a Tax Agent

Individuals wishing to register as a Tax Agents must apply for registration with the Federal Tax Authority by filling an official application form. The Authority may request additional information from the applicant, request a personal interview or ask about the references mentioned in their application. Moreover, the FTA shall examine all applications submitted and make a decision within 15 working days from the date of submission. If the Authority requests additional information, the application will be decided on within 15 working days from the date such information is received.

Once the FTA approves an application, it will be registered within five working days from the date of approval – or any other date determined by the Authority – after all due fees are paid. The Authority may reject the application for registration in the following two cases: First, if the applicant does not meet the registration requirements, or if his/her registration adversely affects the integrity of the tax system in the country.

The Federal Tax Authority shall notify applicants of the approval or rejection of their application within 20 working days from the date of preliminary approval by the Authority. Successful candidate shall be added to the register for a period of three years, which can be renewed before expiry as per the mechanism determined by the Federal Tax Authority.

If the Authority finds a Tax Agent not qualified, or if his/her work adversely affects the integrity of the tax system, or if they commit any serious violation of the tax law, the Agent's permit will be revoked. In this case, the Authority notifies said Agent of the decision – as well as the reasons behind it – within five working days.

Duties of the tax agent include assist the Person with their Tax obligations according to a contractual agreement between the Person and the Tax Agent, without prejudice to any obligations in the Law, maintain the confidentiality of any information obtained in the course of performing his/her duties as a Tax Agent, refuse to participate in any work or plan which may result in a breach of any law by any Person or may jeopardise the integrity of the tax system.

A Tax Agent's duties include assisting the Taxable Person with their tax obligations according to a contractual agreement between the Person and the Tax Agent, in accordance with the Tax Agent's duties as stated in the tax legislation; secondly, and without prejudice to any obligations in the Law, they must maintain the confidentiality of any information obtained in the course of performing his/her duties as a Tax Agent; and finally, a Tax Agent must refuse to participate in any work or plan which may result in a breach of any law by any Person or may jeopardise the integrity of the tax system.