

**Tax Guide  
for Self-Employed  
Entertainers and  
Entertainment Organisers**



INLAND REVENUE  
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## A. Introduction

This guide is to help you with the reporting of your business income in your tax returns if you are a self-employed entertainer (e.g. compere, magician, singer or artiste) or entertainment organiser who puts together shows or performances in return for a fee.

As a self-employed person, either a sole-proprietor or a partner of a partnership business, you need to:

- (a) Keep proper records and accounts of your business for at least 5 years.
- (b) Complete and submit your income tax return by 15 April if you paper file or by 18 April if you e-File. Income Tax is due within one month from the date of the Notice of Assessment. You can pay your Income Tax via GIRO over a maximum of 12 interest-free monthly instalments.
- (c) Make compulsory Medisave contributions **(See Section E for more details)**.

## B. Keeping Proper Records and Accounts

### 1. Why do I need to keep business records?

This is to enable us to ascertain your income and allowable business expenses readily. These records need not to be forwarded to IRAS unless they are specifically requested for verification. Improper records and mere estimations are not acceptable for tax purposes.

You are required to keep proper records and accounts of your business transactions for at least 5 years. The accounts prepared must be supported by proper documents such as invoices, receipts and payment vouchers.

### 2. What income is taxable and how do I keep my income records?

All the income derived from your business is taxable. Taxable income includes:

- **ALL** performance fees collected, including overseas performances
- Ang bao takings
- Income from Advertisements / Product endorsements
- Income from Movies / TV appearance
- Royalties derived from sale of albums

In order to ensure complete and accurate recording of your income, you need to maintain a daily income record book. Refer to the sample "Daily Income Record" at **Appendix 1**.

If income is used to pay for your operating expenses, you must record the income used and add this amount to your net income to arrive at your gross income. You should report your gross income in your income tax return as revenue **(See 4.1 of Section C – "revenue" for more details)**.

For entertainers who receive salaries, you are advised to request for a Form IR8A from your employer for tax filing purposes.

For freelance entertainers, you are advised to obtain an income statement from organisers for record-keeping purposes. Please refer to **Appendix 2** for a sample income statement.

### **3 What are the Business expenses that I can claim and the types of records that I should keep?**

The following are some examples of allowable business expenses and types of records to be kept:

<b>Allowable Business Expenses</b>	<b>Type(s) of Records</b>
Entertainment	Actual receipts or bills, stating purpose of the transaction on the receipt or bill
Performance related expenses such as costumes/ make-up/ hairdressing	Bills / purchase invoices from suppliers
Telephone charges for business	Bills from service providers (e.g. SingTel, M1, StarHub)
Transport charges - Public transport  - Hiring of transport services to ferry one around between performances	Taxi receipts or petrol bills. Expenses incurred in using a private motorcar are not allowable. <b>(See 4.3 of Section C “Allowable Business Expenses” for more details)</b>  Record details such as the date of performance, details of the driver (Name and NRIC) and the amount paid. Note: Payment must be reasonable (at market value) and should not be made to related parties (e.g. family members, friends).
Salary & wages or fees for assistants/helpers/entertainers	Payment vouchers or salary & wages schedule. Refer to the sample Monthly Salary & Wages Record at <b>Appendix 3</b> .  <i>Note: Organisers are advised to prepare annual income statements (See Appendix 2) for payees, stating total income earned for the year.</i>
Compulsory employer's CPF contributions made for assistants/helpers/entertainers	CPF statements
Capital allowances on fixed assets purchased for business use (e.g. musical instruments for bands)	Invoices or receipts of the fixed assets purchased
Promotional expense E.g. Cash contributions to clients for <b>specific</b> business promotional purposes that would bring about goodwill or benefit one's business such as commemorative magazines or festival	Receipt/ Acknowledgement slip for the cash contribution.

In summary, you should regularly prepare a consolidated business expenses record. Refer to the sample Monthly Business Expenses Record at **Appendix 4**.

If a receipt does not describe the goods or services bought, you should provide a description of the transaction on the receipt. For cases where the supplier does not issue any receipt, you should maintain a record book to record the name of supplier or service provider, date, description of goods or services and amount paid.

#### **4. How do I record my income and expenses for projects?**

Entertainment organizers are advised to keep records of income and expenses on per project/show/performance basis, since your expenses incurred may differ from project to project. You may refer to the sample Income and Expenses Record for entertainment organisers at **Appendix 5**.

At the end of each year, you have to consolidate all income received and expenses incurred including all projects, shows undertaken and prepare the statement of accounts of your business. (**See 6 of section B- What is a Certified Statement of Accounts?**)

Entertainers, on the other hand, can consolidate all their income and expenses records.

#### **5. Do I need to maintain a Business Bank Account?**

For proper accounting, it is recommended that you maintain a separate bank account for your business. Private or personal transactions should be kept separate. You should keep the bank statements or passbooks of your business and personal bank accounts.

#### **6. What is a Certified Statement of Accounts?**

Certified statement of accounts is Profit and Loss Statement and Balance Sheet that are signed by you, indicating that the accounts are true and correct.

At the end of each year, you could use the business records kept to prepare the statement of accounts of your business.

Profit and loss statement shows the results of a business for the year. If the total revenue (i.e. income) exceeds the total expenses, the result is a net profit. If the total expenses exceed the total revenue, the result is a net loss. Refer to the sample statement of accounts at **Appendix 6**.

Some business expenses incurred might not be deductible for tax purposes. When preparing the income tax return, you must ensure that only deductible expenses are claimed. (**See 4.3 of Section C – “Allowable Business Expense” for more details**).

Balance sheet shows the assets, debts and money invested of your business as at the end of calendar year.

You may engage an accounting professional to prepare a proper statement of accounts for you.

## C. Filing of Income Tax Returns

### 1. I have just started my business as an entertainment organizer/ vocation as a freelance entertainer. Do I have to inform IRAS about it?

You do not have to inform IRAS immediately after you started your business/vocation. An income tax return (Form B or B1) will be sent to you at the beginning of the year, usually before 15 March, for you to report your income.

However, if you do not receive the income tax return by 15 March each year, you may download and complete the 'Registration Form for New Individual Taxpayer' from our website, and return it to us by fax, mail or email to taxqueries@iras.gov.sg.

### 2. When will my business/vocation income be taxed?

The income you receive this year will only be taxed in the next year. For example, you will need to report your income for the year 2020 in year 2021, which is known as Year of Assessment 2021. You need to file your tax by 15 April 2020 if you paper file and by 18 April 2020 if you e-File.

The period which you calculate your profits or losses of your business/vocation will be from the start date of your business/vocation to 31 Dec of that year. Subsequent reporting will be from 1 Jan to 31 December each year.

### 3. Where do I report my business/vocation income?

As a self-employed entertainer/ entertainment organiser, the business/vocation income is treated as part of your total personal income and taxed at personal income tax rates.

If you registered your business as a sole proprietorship, you should report your business/vocation income in your individual income tax return (Form B) under 'Sole Proprietorship' in the 'Trade, Business, Profession or Vocation' section.

If you registered your business as a partnership, the precedent partner is required to report the partnership income in Form P. As a partner, you should report your share of partnership income in your individual income tax return (Form B) under 'Partnership' in the 'Trade, Business, Profession or Vocation' section.

Your share of partnership income is the sum of your divisible profit/loss, salary, CPF, interest, rent and other Singapore income from the partnership.

### 4. How do I report my business income?

You are required to report your sole proprietorship/partnership business income in a summarised 4-line statement, as follows:

- Revenue (Total Income)
- Gross Profit/Loss
- Allowable Business Expenses
- Adjusted Profit/Loss



If your business income is \$200,000 or less, you only need to submit a summarised 2-line statement, i.e. revenue and adjusted profit/loss.

#### 4.1 **Revenue**

Revenue refers to the total income of your business before deducting any business expenses. **(See 2 and 3 of Section B for more details).**

If your business revenue is \$500,000 or more, you have to submit a certified Statement of Accounts together with your individual income tax return.

If your business revenue is less than \$500,000, you are not required to submit a certified Statement of Accounts but you must still prepare the accounts and be ready to submit to IRAS if we request for it.

You must keep proper records of your business transactions regardless of your revenue. Upon our request, you are to submit these records to us.

#### 4.2 **Gross Profit/Loss**

Gross profit/loss refers to the amount of revenue after deducting the cost of goods sold. For service industries such as the entertainment industry, cost of goods sold is not applicable. Hence, the gross profit or loss is the same as revenue.

#### 4.3 **Allowable Business Expenses**

Business expenses are allowed for tax purposes if they are wholly and exclusively incurred in the production of income. Private expenses and expenses on private cars are not deductible. Expenditure on capital assets is not deductible. However, if the assets qualify as plants and machinery, capital allowances **(see 5 of Section C - What are capital allowances? for more details)** may be allowed. Some examples of allowable and disallowable expenses are:

<b>Allowable Business Expenses</b>	<b>Disallowable Business Expenses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stage setup cost</li> <li>• Payment made to singers/ bands</li> <li>• Performance related expenses:- costumes/ make-up/ hairdressing</li> <li>• License or permit fees</li> <li>• Telephone charges for business</li> <li>• Transport charges</li> <li>• Salary &amp; bonus for assistants/helpers/ entertainers</li> <li>• Compulsory employer's CPF contributions made for assistants/helpers/ entertainers</li> <li>• Upkeep of motor vehicles such as pickups, vans, lorries</li> <li>• Capital allowances on fixed assets purchased for business use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your own salary, bonus and Medisave/CPF contributions</li> <li>• Your own medical fees, income tax, insurance and donations</li> <li>• Food and household expenses</li> <li>• Entertainment expenses for family members and friends</li> <li>• Interest on loans obtained for private use</li> <li>• Maintenance costs of private cars (E or S-plate cars) including ERP, petrol and parking</li> <li>• Cost of fixed assets purchased</li> <li>• Depreciation</li> <li>• Fines and penalties</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repair and maintenance of assets used for business (e.g. hiring of tuners)</li> <li>• Accountancy fees</li> <li>• Entertainment</li> <li>• Promotional expense</li> </ul>	
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#### 4.4 **Adjusted Profit/Loss**

Adjusted profit/loss refers to gross profit/loss after deducting the allowable business expenses and any capital allowances claimed.

### 5. **What are capital allowances? (Applicable for purchases of Fixed Assets)**

If you are a self-employed, you may need to purchase fixed assets such as computer, fax machine, musical instrument and motor vehicles in the course of carrying out your business. Such expenses incurred in purchasing these fixed assets are capital in nature. Hence, you are not allowed to claim the costs as expenses. However, you may claim capital allowances. Capital allowances are deductible expenses allowed for the use of fixed assets purchased in the business.

You may claim capital allowances on commercial vehicles & Q-plate cars registered before 1 Apr 1998. Private motor vehicles (E or S-plate cars) are not eligible for the claim.

### 6. **How do I calculate capital allowances?**

#### 6.1 **One Year Write-off**

The full cost of the asset will be claimed as capital allowance in one year. This is applicable for computers, fax machines, other automation equipment and fixed assets costing no more than \$5,000 each. The claim for one year write-off of all such assets is capped at \$30,000 per year of assessment.

#### 6.2 **Three Years Write-off**

The full cost of the asset will be claimed as capital allowance over three years. Generally, most of the fixed assets purchased would qualify for the three years write-off (except motor cars, motor cycles & light goods vehicles).

#### 6.3 **Write-off Over the Working Life of the Asset**

This method is applicable for motor vehicles such as motorcycles, vans, pickups, trucks and lorries. Capital allowances are not applicable for private cars.

In the year of purchase, you can claim an initial allowance of 20% of the cost of the asset. In the subsequent years, you can claim annual allowance, which is calculated by taking 80% of the cost and dividing it by the working life of the asset.

<b>Assets</b>	<b>Working Life (No. of Years)</b>
Lorries, Trucks, Vans	6
Motorcycles and Bicycles	8

## 7. What if I incur business losses?

If you incur business losses after deducting the allowable expenses, this business loss and any capital allowances claimed can be offset against your other income such as employment, interest, dividend and rental income in the same year.

If your other income is not enough to offset your business loss, you can carry forward the balance of the business losses and capital allowances claimed to the following year to offset against income of that year.

However, if you cease your business, you can only carry forward the balance of the business losses but not the balance of the capital allowances to the following year.

### D. Withholding Tax on Payment made to Non-Resident Public Entertainers (For Entertainment organisers)

As an entertainment organiser, you may engage foreign public entertainers for your shows. You are responsible, as a payer, to

- Withhold tax at 15% of the gross income of the non-resident public entertainers [or 10% if the income is due and payable to the non-resident public entertainer during the period from 22 Feb 2010 to 31 Mar 2022] from services performed in Singapore;
- e-File the withholding tax form via myTax Portal and
- Pay the withholding tax to IRAS by the 15th of the second month from the date of payment to the non-resident public entertainer.

#### 1. Gross income - What is taxable and what is not?

	Nature of Income	Remarks
<u>Taxable Income</u>	1) Fees/ Commission (Including Tips) 2) Allowances (e.g. per diem) 3) Benefits-in-kind/ Private Expenses (e.g. Food and Income tax borne by Payer)	Payment made by payer
<u>Non-taxable Income</u>	1) Accommodation provided for <= 60 days in any calendar year 2) Cost of airfare	- Payment made by payer  - The <u>entire stay will be taxable</u> if accommodation is <b>&gt; 60 days</b> in a calendar year

<u>Deductible Expense</u>	1) Accommodation provided for <=60 days in a calendar year 2) Cost of airfare	- Payment made by non-resident public entertainer  - The <u>entire stay will not be deductible</u> if accommodation is > <b>60 days</b> in a calendar year
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### Example 1

A non-resident public entertainer was engaged to perform in Singapore for 20 days. Besides artiste fees of \$5,000, he was also provided with hotel accommodation @ \$200 a day. Cost of airfare of \$1,500 was borne by the non-resident public entertainer. His tax liability is computed as follows (**tax borne by non-resident public entertainer**):

Artiste fees	\$5,000
Hotel accommodation provided (< 60 days)	NIL (Not Taxable - Concession)
Less airfare paid by the non-resident public entertainer	<u>(\$1,500)</u> (Deductible - Concession)
Taxable Gross Income	\$3,500
Withholding Tax @ 10%	<u>\$350.00</u>

### Example 2

Where the non-resident public entertainer's **tax is borne by the payer** (e.g. sponsor/agent), the amount of tax allowance is a benefit in the hands of the non-resident public entertainer and is taxable. The tax allowance and withholding tax are computed as follows:-

Artiste fees	\$ 3,500
Add Tax allowance (\$3,500 x 10/90)	<u>\$ 388.89</u>
Taxable Gross Income	\$ 3,888.89
Withholding Tax @ 10%	<u>\$ 388.89</u>

## 2. Date of payment

Date of payment is defined as the earliest of the following dates:

- When payment is due and payable based on the agreement or contract. In the absence of contract or agreement, the date of invoice would be the deemed date of payment;
- When payment is credited to the account of the non-resident public entertainer or any other account designated by the entertainer; or
- The date of actual payment

### 3. Multiple payments for a single engagement

- o If you make multiple payments to the same non-resident public entertainer on the same engagement, you may consolidate the payments when **e-filing and making payment** to IRAS
- o The interval between the first and subsequent dates of payment must not exceed 60 days
- o Withholding tax must be made to IRAS by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the second month of the last date of payment

### 4. Consequences of Late Payment

You are required to pay the withholding tax by the due date. If you are late in payment, the following penalties will be imposed:

- a. 5% penalty
- b. 1% additional penalty will be imposed on the withholding tax for every completed month (subject to a maximum of 15%) that the tax remains unpaid.

## E. Medisave Contributions

### 1. Do I need to contribute to Medisave?

Medisave contributions are compulsory for all self-employed persons who are Singapore citizens or permanent residents. If you earn a net trade income of more than \$6,000 a year, you have to contribute Medisave based on a specified percentage of your net trade income, subject to a maximum amount.

Net trade income refers to your gross trade income less all allowable business expenses, capital allowances and trade losses as determined by IRAS.

IRAS will send you a Notice of Computation (NOC) after assessing your actual income for the relevant Year of Assessment, to inform you of the amount of Medisave you need to contribute to Central Provident Fund (CPF). You may contact CPF Board on Medisave payment matters.

### 2. Can I claim Provident Fund relief for the Medisave contributions and voluntary CPF contributions made?

As a self-employed person, you may claim tax relief in respect of your compulsory and voluntary CPF contributions up to the total mandatory CPF contribution rate of your net business income assessed or the CPF relief cap for the year, whichever is lower. Please refer to the IRAS website for the rates and CPF relief cap.

We will allow the Provident Fund relief based on the date that you contributed to the CPF account. For example, CPF contributions made in year 2020 will be allowed for tax deduction in the Year of Assessment 2021. You need not make a claim in your tax return. The Provident Fund relief will be automatically allowed to you based on information given by the CPF Board.

## **F. Offences and Penalties**

### **1. What if I did not keep proper records or keep incomplete records?**

You may be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$1,000 and in default of payment of the \$1,000, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months.

### **2. What if I failed to submit my return?**

You may be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$1,000 and in default of payment to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months.

### **3. What if I submit incorrect return without reasonable excuse?**

For submission of incorrect return without reasonable excuse, you are liable on conviction to pay a penalty equal to double the amount of tax which has been undercharged and to pay a fine not exceeding \$5,000, or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 years, or both.

### **4. What if I wilfully evade taxes or to assist any other person to evade tax?**

If you wilfully evade, or assist other persons to evade, you are liable on conviction to pay a penalty of 3 times the amount of tax evaded and to pay a fine not exceeding \$10,000, or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 years, or both.

For serious fraudulent evasion cases, you are liable on conviction to pay a penalty of 4 times the amount of tax evaded and to pay a fine not exceeding \$50,000, or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 5 years, or both.

## **G. IRAS Voluntary Disclosure Programme**

We encourage you to come forward voluntarily to disclose any omissions or errors made in past years' income tax returns.

For voluntary disclosures, IRAS will accord reduced penalty, that is, penalty will be waived for voluntary disclosures made within the year of income tax filing and a reduced 5% penalty will be imposed for every back-year disclosures.

For more details, please refer to the e-Tax Guide on IRAS' Voluntary Disclosure Programme: [www.iras.gov.sg](http://www.iras.gov.sg) > Businesses > Self-employed / Sole-proprietors / Partners > Getting It Right > Voluntary Disclosure of Errors for Reduced Penalties.

## H. IRAS Services

### For voluntary disclosures

Email to [iit\\_compliance@iras.gov.sg](mailto:iit_compliance@iras.gov.sg)

### IRAS website

[www.iras.gov.sg](http://www.iras.gov.sg)



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**APPENDIX 1-DAILY INCOME RECORD**

**Nature of Business :** Getai or TV Performances/ Advertisement/ Product Endorsements/ Overseas Performances / Performance Organisers / Royalties/  
Others (Pls specify):  
**Year:** \_\_\_\_\_

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1												
2												
3												
4												
5												
6												
7												
8												
9												
10												
11												
12												
13												
14												
15												
16												
17												
18												
19												
20												
21												
22												
23												
24												
25												
26												
27												
28												
29												
30												
31												
<b>Total</b>												

Grand Total (\$)



**APPENDIX 2-INCOME STATEMENT**

Date:

<Name of Receiptient>

<Address>

<Address>

Dear Sir/Madam,

**PERFORMANCE FEES RECEIVED FOR THE YEAR XXXX**

**< NAME> <NRIC>**

This is to certify that the performance fees paid to you for the year ended 31 December XXXX amounted to \$XXXXXX.

Please report the fees received to the Comptroller of Income Tax for the above-mentioned year before 15 April XXXX.

Yours faithfully,

<Business Name>

< Name of organiser>

**APPENDIX 3 - MONTHLY SALARY & WAGES RECORD**

Name of Business : \_\_\_\_\_

Month: \_\_\_\_\_

S/n	Name of Assistant/Helper	NRIC/M'sia IC/Fin/WP No.	Salary/Wages	CPF Payable			SDL	FWL
				Employee	Employer	Total		
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								
<b>Total</b>								

**APPENDIX 4 - BUSINESS EXPENSES RECORD**

Name of Business : \_\_\_\_\_

Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Expense	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Business Expenses</b>												
Telephone charges												
Transport charges:-												
- MRT/Taxi/Bus												
- Hire of driver												
Entertainment												
Salary/Wages/Fees for assistants/helpers												
Employer's CPF contributions for assistants/helpers												
Performance related expenses:-												
- Costumes												
- Makeup												
- Hairdressings												
Other running expenses :												
<b>Total</b>												

**Total Business Expenses (\$)**

**APPENDIX 5 - INCOME AND EXPENSES RECORD (Applicable for Entertainment Organisers)**

DATE OF SHOW/PROJECT \_\_\_\_\_

	S\$	
<b><u>Total Fees Received</u></b>		<b>(A)</b>
<b><u>Business Expenses</u></b>		
Performers fees		
: (Artiste Name)		
: (Artiste Name)		
: (Artiste Name)		
: (Artiste Name)		
: (Artiste Name)		
Telephone charges		
Entertainment		
Salary/Wages/Fees for assistants/helpers		
Employer's CPF contributions for assistants/helpers		
<u>Other running expenses :</u>		
<b>Total</b>		<b>(B)</b>
<b>Net Profit</b>		<b>(A-B)</b>

**APPENDIX 6 - INCOME AND EXPENSES RECORD (Applicable for Entertainment Organisers)**

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS - ENTERTAINERS / ENTERTAINMENT ORGANIZERS			
NAME :	_____		
BUSINESS ADDRESS :	_____ _____		
FOR PERIOD FROM	[ ]	t o	[ ]
<b>REVENUE</b>	\$	\$	[ ] Box 1
<i>(Gross Income Received for ALL Performances via Media, Roadshows, Overseas &amp; Local stage shows, Advertisements, Private functions, and Royalties in respect of album sales )</i>			
<b>LESS: ALLOWABLE BUSINESS EXPENSES</b>			
<i>(please refer to the section on "Claiming of deduction on non-deductible expenses" to ensure that you do not claim any non-allowable expenses)</i>			
Phone, Pager Charges	[ ]		
Transport charges	[ ]		
Entertainment	[ ]		
Gifts and Greeting Cards	[ ]		
Salary/Wages/Fees for assistants/helpers	[ ]		
Performance related expenses:-			
- Costumes	[ ]		
- Makeup	[ ]		
- Hairdressings	[ ]		
Other Running Expenses:			
<i>(please indicate the nature and breakdown below)</i>			
i) _____	[ ]		
ii) _____	[ ]		
iii) _____	[ ]		
iv) _____	[ ]		
Total Allowable Business Expenses			[ ] Box 2
<b>ADJUSTED PROFIT/(LOSS)</b>			[ ] Box 3
Box 1 less Box 2			
<b>SUMMARY</b>			
<i>Amounts to be declared in Internet Filing / Income Tax Form:</i>			
<b><u>4-line Statement</u></b>			
Turnover (Total Sales/Income)	(Box 1)	[ ]	
Gross Profit	(Box 1)	[ ]	
Allowable Business Expenses	(Box 2)	[ ]	
Adjusted Profit/(Loss)	(Box 3)	[ ]	
Name of taxpayer: _____			
Signature : _____			