Understanding the coronavirus (COVID-19) tax payment deadline changes

You might have heard about the 90-day tax payment extension due to the coronavirus pandemic but aren’t certain about what it covers. What does the extension mean for most Americans? Do taxes still need to be filed and paid by April 15, 2020?

Tax Day is now July 15, 2020, due to the coronavirus pandemic. This change includes the filing and payment deadline. The IRS is still accepting returns and processing refunds, and we are ready to help you get your important refunds now (see options at the bottom of this article).

Want to find out more? Read on as H&R Block’s experts at The Tax Institute are here to help you understand the changes to the tax deadline due to the coronavirus.

Covid-19 tax deadline: What you need to know

As of March 20, 2020, the Treasury Department announced the following covid-19 tax deadline guidelines, giving certain taxpayers and businesses an additional 90 days to file and pay their 2019 tax liability. Here are the key dates.

**Tax return deadline – July 15, 2020.** Your tax filing is now due on this date. If you need more time, you can request an extension to October 15, 2020. Read the FAQs below for details.

**Tax payment deadline – July 15, 2020.** If you owe income taxes for 2019, you can delay your IRS payment until this time. You will not owe interest or penalties if you pay before this deadline.

Frequently asked questions about the coronavirus tax deadline changes

**Q. Who is eligible for the tax filing and payment deferral?
A.** The following types of filers are eligible to use the special coronavirus tax extension.

* Individual Form 1040 filers
* Corporations filing Form 1120
* Trusts and states filing Form 1041
* Fiscal year partnerships, associations and companies with due dates on April 15, 2020 (uncommon)

**Q. What do I need to do to delay my filing and tax payment?
A.** You must file your tax return or extension by July 15 as you normally would. The 90-day tax payment deferral itself is automatic when you file, which means interest and penalties are automatically waived for 90 days and won’t accrue for qualifying taxpayers and businesses until after July 15.

**Q. What if I need more time to prepare my return?
A.** You must file Form 4868 to request an extension by July 15, 2020. This extension would give you until October 15 to file your return, but your payment would still be due by the extended payment deadline, July 15, 2020.

**Q. What if I’m getting a refund? Does this news affect me at all?
A**.  It should not affect you if you’re receiving a refund. The Treasury Department says you should still expect to receive your refund within the normal time period (9 out of 10 are received within 21 days of electronic filing).

**Q. What types of payments does this deferral cover?
A.** It covers income tax payments, as well as any normally associated interest and penalties, such as the failure-to-pay penalty. It also covers estimated tax payments (included payments of tax on self-employment income) due on April 15, 2020, for the 2020 tax year.

**Q. How much can I defer?
A.** There is no limit on the amount of tax payment you can defer.

**Q. Does this deferral apply to 2020 estimated tax payments (including estimated self-employment taxes)?**
**A.** It depends on the payment date.

* First quarter 2020 estimated tax payment – The deferral includes this estimated tax payment otherwise due on April 15, 2020.
* Second quarter 2020 estimated tax payment – The deferral does not apply to this tax payment due on June 15, 2020. In addition, the penalty for failure to make estimated tax payments for 2019 is not waived or deferred.

**Q. Does this deferral apply to my state tax return also?
A.** States are issuing their own guidance about deadlines. For more information, see [**State income tax returns impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19)**](https://www.hrblock.com/tax-center/filing/states/coronavirus-filing-updates/).

**Q. Does this announcement mean I don’t owe taxes for 2019?
A.** No, the deferral only extends the due date of when your tax liability is due. Interest and penalties will again accrue on outstanding tax liabilities starting July 16, 2020. The deferral does not exclude or exempt taxpayers from filing if they are already required to file.