



Login Id : 14274

TITLE: Updates on the Operation of Firms during Total Lockdown**DATE:** 17/06/2021

17 June 2021

Circular No. **M****TO ALL MEMBER FIRMS****UPDATES ON THE OPERATION OF FIRMS DURING TOTAL LOCKDOWN**

We refer to MIA Statement [NATIONWIDE LOCKDOWN FROM 1 - 14 JUNE 2021: LATEST UPDATES ON SECTORS PERMITTED TO OPERATE](#) dated 31 May 2021 where members were advised to work from home until further notice. In the aforementioned statement, it was highlighted that MIA had written to the Ministry of Finance (MOF) to seek information and to request approval for MIA member firms to operate.

The Institute has since received multiple queries from member firms seeking clarification on whether member firms are allowed to operate or whether special approval is given to collect some documents from work premises.

We would like to advise member firms on the following:

- Following the announcement of a full nationwide lockdown, only 17 essential sectors are allowed to operate during the lockdown period. Professional services are not essential services and hence, accounting firms are not allowed to operate physically in their offices or travel back to offices to take some documents.
Note: Nevertheless, essential service providers such as the Audit Oversight Board (AOB) registered auditors can continue to provide capital market services. Visas and letters were provided to the AOB registered auditors who requested the letter for the purpose of audit of public interest entities and scheduled fund. This was communicated directly by the AOB to their registered auditors.
- We were advised by Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) that the approval to operate could be obtained separately from the relevant supervisory for those sectors that are not listed as essential. MIA sent the letter to MOF on 30 May 2021 requesting approval for MIA member firms to operate. On 1 June 2021, we were informed that the Institute should instead get the approval for MIA member firms to operate from MITI.
- We immediately communicated with MITI after receiving the above letter from the MOF. A MITI officer advised MIA to obtain assistance from the MOF to contact Keselamatan Negara (MKN) in order to list accountancy related services as part of essential services. Only after MKN has added the accountancy sector in the list of services will MITI allow accounting firms to submit their application via the COVID-19 Intelligent Management System (CIMS) 3.0, to facilitate movement of operations at office premises.
- Further on 2 June 2021, upon advice from an MOF officer, a letter addressed to the Minister of Finance was sent again to request for accountancy related services designated as part of essential services.
- Subsequent to the announcement on extension of lockdown period, a follow-up email was sent to the MOF on 15 June 2021. In the email to the MOF, we emphasized submission of tax return for companies are based on audited financial statements, the extension of reporting deadlines from Suruhanjaya Syarikat Malaysia (SSM) will not be helpful if the Inland Revenue Board Malaysia (IRB) does not extend the deadline for companies' tax submission which is based on audited financial statements.
- Recently, MIA had a meeting with the Accountant General (AG) on 16 June 2021 and this issue was brought up to AG's attention. MIA was requested to write another application which we have sent on the same day.

We hope that the above explanation demonstrates the Institute's action in supporting our profession and member firms through this challenging time. As we continue to work on the matter of including the services of accounting firms as essential services, for the greater good of the community in order to win this war against the pandemic, we request member firms to comply with the directive provided by the Government.

Please be guided accordingly.

Yours faithfully

MALAYSIAN INSTITUTE OF ACCOUNTANTS

DR. NURMAZILAH DATO' MAHZAN

Chief Executive Officer