UAE · CORPORATE TAX

UAE Corporate Tax Return: Deadline, Penalties, Checklist

Last verified: 2026-11-12 · Published: 2026-11-12 · 6 min read · Sources: Federal Tax Authority: Corporate Tax; FTA: Corporate Tax Guide on Tax Returns (CTGTXR1); FTA: General Corporate Tax Guide

IN SHORT

Every business registered for UAE Corporate Tax files one return per tax period on the FTA's EmaraTax portal. The return and any tax due are due within 9 months of the end of the tax period. Taxable income up to AED 375,000 is taxed at 0% and the rest at 9%. A late return costs AED 500 a month for the first year, then AED 1,000 a month.

Last verified: 2026-11-12 · Source: Federal Tax Authority (FTA)

Who must register and file

Corporate Tax applies under Federal Decree-Law No. 47 of 2022 to tax periods starting on or after 1 June 2023. Companies and other juridical persons in the UAE must register, free zone companies included. An individual must register when business turnover goes over AED 1 million in a calendar year. Salary, personal investment income and private real estate income do not count.

Registration deadlines come from FTA Decision No. 3 of 2024:

- A company incorporated in the UAE on or after 1 March 2024: within **3 months** of incorporation
- An individual over the AED 1 million turnover threshold: by **31 March** of the following year
- A registered business files a return for every tax period, even when no tax is due and even when it elects Small Business Relief

The rate, the AED 375,000 band and Small Business Relief

Taxable income up to **AED 375,000** is taxed at 0%. Taxable income above that is taxed at **9%**. A qualifying free zone person pays 0% on qualifying income and 9% on the rest.

Small Business Relief lets a resident business with revenue of **AED 3,000,000 or less** be treated as having no taxable income. Ministerial Decision No. 131 of 2026 extended it to tax periods ending on or before **31 December 2029**. The original end date was 31 December 2026, and many guides still show it.

- Revenue must be AED 3,000,000 or less in the current tax period and in every previous one
- Qualifying free zone persons and members of a multinational group with revenue above AED 3.15 billion cannot elect it
- It is not automatic: you elect it in the return for each tax period, and you cannot claim it later for a return already filed without it
- You still file, but the return is shorter; keep bank statements, sales ledgers and invoices that

Not legal advice — verify with Federal Tax Authority (FTA)

prove your revenue

The filing deadline: 9 months after the tax period

Your tax period is normally your financial year. The return must be filed, and any Corporate Tax paid, within **9 months of the end of the tax period**. Filing and payment share the same date. Some common year ends:

- Year ending 31 December 2025: return and payment were due by 30 September 2026
- Year ending 31 March 2026: due by 31 December 2026
- Year ending 30 June 2026: due by 31 March 2027
- Year ending 31 December 2026: due by 30 September 2027

What the return on EmaraTax asks for

The FTA's guide on tax returns splits the form into nine parts. EmaraTax only shows the fields and schedules that apply to you, so a small business sees far fewer of them.

- **Part A** Taxable person information, and **Part B** elections (Small Business Relief, the realisation basis and others)
- **Part C** Accounting schedule: income statement, other comprehensive income, financial position and audit details
- **Part D** Accounting adjustments and exempt income, and **Part E** reliefs
- **Part F** Other adjustments, such as items to add back, and **Part G** tax liability and tax credits, including losses brought forward
- **Part H** Review and declaration, and **Part I** schedules
- The financial statements must be attached to the return, unless you elected Small Business Relief

Accounting records and financial statements

The return starts from your financial statements, so the books come first. The accrual basis is the general rule. A business with revenue of AED 3 million or less may use the cash basis.

- Audited financial statements are required when revenue is above **AED 50 million** in the tax period, for every qualifying free zone person whatever its revenue, and for tax groups (Ministerial Decision No. 84 of 2025)
- A UAE company needs a UAE-registered auditor; the return asks for the audit opinion and the auditor's name
- Keep records and documents for **7 years** after the end of the tax period they relate to
- The FTA can ask for the financial statements behind any return, so keep them even when you do not attach them

Late registration and late filing penalties

Corporate Tax penalties are set by Cabinet Decision No. 75 of 2023, as amended by Cabinet Decision No. 10 of 2024. Cabinet Decision No. 129 of 2025 changed the penalties for VAT and excise tax, not this table. The main amounts:

UAE CORPORATE TAX ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTIES (CABINET DECISION NO. 75 OF 2023, AS AMENDED)

Violation	Penalty
Registration application not submitted on time	AED 10,000
Tax return not filed on time	AED 500 a month for the first 12 months, then AED 1,000 a month
Tax not paid on time	14% a year, charged monthly on the unpaid tax
Incorrect tax return	AED 500, unless corrected before the filing deadline
Error corrected by voluntary disclosure	1% a month on the tax difference
Required records not kept	AED 10,000; AED 20,000 for a repeat within 24 months

- The late filing penalty applies to the missing return even when no tax is due
- Late registration waiver: the AED 10,000 penalty is waived automatically if you file the return for your **first** tax period within **7 months** of its end, not 9 (FTA, May 2026)
- If you already paid that penalty and meet the condition, the FTA adds a credit to your EmaraTax account

Step-by-step filing checklist

Work through this list for each tax period. Start straight after the year end, not in month nine.

- **Check registration.** Confirm you have a Corporate Tax registration number and that your FTA record is up to date
- **Close the books.** Post every invoice, bill, payroll run and bank line for the year, reconcile the bank and lock the period
- **Prepare financial statements.** Profit and loss and financial position; arrange the audit if revenue is above AED 50 million or you are a qualifying free zone person
- **Decide on Small Business Relief.** Check revenue against AED 3,000,000 for this period and all earlier ones, and agree the election with your adviser
- **Work out taxable income.** Start from accounting profit, add back non-deductible costs, remove exempt income, then use losses brought forward (up to 75% of taxable income)
- **Apply the rates.** 0% up to AED 375,000 and 9% above, after converting to AED
- **Fill the return on EmaraTax.** Enter the figures, attach the financial statements, review and submit
- **Pay the tax.** Pay any Corporate Tax due by the same 9-month deadline
- **Keep the file.** Store the workings, statements and evidence for 7 years

Where your accounting software fits

The return is only as good as the books behind it. ERP HRM Solution keeps those books: sales, purchases, expenses, payroll and bank lines post to the ledger, and **Reports → Corporate Tax** builds a worksheet from the accounting profit with add-backs, losses, the AED conversion and the Small Business Relief election.

It does not file on EmaraTax and it is not a tax agent. You or your tax agent submit the return. This guide is general information, not tax advice: confirm your own position with the FTA or a registered tax agent.

Frequently asked questions

When is the UAE Corporate Tax return due?

Within 9 months of the end of the tax period, and any tax due must be paid by the same date. For a financial year ending 31 December 2026, that is 30 September 2027.

Do I have to file if no Corporate Tax is due?

Yes. Every registered taxable person files a return for each tax period, including businesses with income under AED 375,000 and those electing Small Business Relief. A missing return draws the late filing penalty even when no tax is due.

What is the penalty for filing the Corporate Tax return late?

AED 500 for each month or part of a month for the first 12 months, then AED 1,000 a month from the 13th month, under Cabinet Decision No. 75 of 2023. Late payment adds 14% a year on the unpaid tax, charged monthly.

What is the penalty for late Corporate Tax registration?

AED 10,000. It is waived automatically if you file the return for your first tax period within 7 months of the end of that period. If you already paid it, the FTA credits the amount to your EmaraTax account.

Is Small Business Relief still available?

Yes, for tax periods ending on or before 31 December 2029, after Ministerial Decision No. 131 of 2026. Revenue must be AED 3,000,000 or less in the period and all earlier ones, and you must elect it in the return.

Who needs audited financial statements for Corporate Tax?

Businesses with revenue above AED 50 million in the tax period, all qualifying free zone persons, and tax groups, under Ministerial Decision No. 84 of 2025. The audit must be done by a UAE-registered auditor.

Can ERP HRM Solution file my Corporate Tax return?

No. It keeps the books and prepares the Corporate Tax worksheet and financial reports. You or your tax agent file the return on EmaraTax.

Sources

- Federal Tax Authority: Corporate Tax
  https://tax.gov.ae/en/taxes/corporate.tax.aspx
- FTA: Corporate Tax Guide on Tax Returns (CTGTXR1)
  https://www.tax.gov.ae/Datafolder/Files/Guides/CT/CT-Returns-EN-11-11-2024.pdf
- FTA: General Corporate Tax Guide
  https://tax.gov.ae/DataFolder/Files/Guides/CT/CT%20General%20Guide%20-%20EN%20-%2010%2009%202023.pdf
- Ministry of Finance: Cabinet Decision No. 75 of 2023 and its amendments on Corporate Tax penalties
  https://mof.gov.ae/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Cabinet-Decision-No.-75-of-2023-and-its-amendments-on-the-Administrative-Penalties-for-Violations-Related-to-the-Application-of-Federal-Decree-Law-No.-47-of-2022.pdf
- FTA Decision No. 3 of 2024 on the Corporate Tax registration timeline
  https://tax.gov.ae/Datafolder/Files/Legislation/FTA%20Decision%20No.%203%20of%202024%20on%20Registration%20Timeline%20for%20Corporate%20Tax%20-%20For%20publishing.pdf
- Ministry of Finance: Small Business Relief extended to 31 December 2029
  https://mof.gov.ae/en/news/ministry-of-finance-announces-extension-of-small-business-relief-for-corporate-tax-purposes-until-31-december-2029/

- FTA: late registration penalty waiver initiative (May 2026)
  https://tax.gov.ae/en/media.centre/news/fta.expects.number.of.beneficiaries.from.corporate.tax.late.registration.penalty.waiver.initiative.to.rise.to.91000.aspx
- PwC: Ministerial Decision No. 84 of 2025 on audited financial statements
  https://www.pwc.com/m1/en/services/tax/me-tax-legal-news/2025/uae-corporate-tax-md-84-of-2025-on-audited-financial-statements.html

A Corporate Tax return starts from closed, reconciled books. **ERP HRM Solution** keeps the ledger for UAE companies and builds the Corporate Tax worksheet from it, so the figures you enter on EmaraTax trace back to posted documents.
https://erphrmsolution.com/guides/uae-corporate-tax-return-guide