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## MEDIA RELEASE



### Countdown to 2016 Tax Season Begins Today – Four Months to Get Your House in Order

With just four months to go to the start of the 2016 tax season, [Australia's largest firm of tax accountants](#) H&R Block has prepared the checklist for taxpayers to prepare for a quick and healthy tax refund.

H&R Block's Director of Tax Communications, Mr Mark Chapman, said "Now is the time to start preparing for June 30 to avoid the last minute rush that might lead to a lower refund or in the worst case, a tax audit".

- 1) Declare ALL of your income** - The Tax Office now receives much of your income information electronically from third parties, including most institutions that pay interest and dividends, foreign income from overseas tax offices, PAYG Summaries from employers and pension payments. Therefore prepare your earnings records so you declare all of your income for the year.
  
- 2) Self Education** - You can claim education expenses in connection to the income you are currently earning, but you need documents/receipts to claim a deduction. You still have time to do a course before June 30.
  
- 3) Home Office** - You are only entitled to claim a percentage of the actual costs incurred, eg. electricity and heating costs, depreciation of office furniture and equipment and a percentage of telephone and internet use based on a log book kept for a four week period. Now is the time to start putting together those records.
  
- 4) Car Expenses** - You can claim [motor vehicle expenses related to your work](#) but you need: a log book; a record of kilometres travelled; receipts and invoices. Now is the time to start preparing and filling that log book.
  
- 5) Claiming tax deductions for items that you use part for work and part personally** - You can claim that part of the expense that directly relates to your job, eg. mobile phones and laptops. It is time to buy that new phone or laptop, as well as working out the split between private and company use of them.

- 6) Start gathering written evidence** - For claims of more than \$300, you must have written evidence with receipts, like credit card bills, phone invoices. Start pulling these documents together for the last eight months as it will take the pressure off at June 30.
- 7) Defer taxable income** - This is worthwhile if you are close to the top tax threshold of \$180,000. Think about asking your clients to defer payments to the next financial year if you feel as though you will breach the threshold.
- 8) Offset capital gains against capital losses** - If you have a capital gain in this financial year, look to your other investments to see if it is worthwhile realising a capital loss to offset against the capital gain. It is smart to get this process underway now as some assets may take a while to dispose of.
- 9) Seek expert help from a tax agent like H&R Block** - Now is a great time to get expert help to get into shape for the 2016 tax season to maximize your deductions and resultant refund.

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