

Why Paying Your Taxes Is Good for Your Business

Many small business owners in Ghana see tax as a burden — something the government takes from your hard-earned money. But the truth is, being tax compliant opens doors that staying in the shadows never will.

When your business is tax compliant, banks take you seriously. You can bid for government contracts. You can apply for grants and programmes that require a Tax Identification Number (TIN). You build a track record that shows your business is real, serious, and trustworthy.

The Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA) has made it much easier for small businesses to comply. There are simplified tax schemes designed specifically for businesses with smaller turnover, so you're not paying more than you should.

At Resfind, we help businesses understand exactly what they owe, how to pay it, and how to keep records that make the whole process smooth and painless. Most of our clients are surprised by how simple it actually is once they have the right systems in place.

Understanding the Main Taxes in Ghana

There are a few key taxes that most businesses in Ghana need to know about. Income tax is the main one — it's a percentage of your business profits. The rate depends on your business type and how much you earn.

If your annual turnover is above a certain threshold, you'll need to register for Value Added Tax (VAT). This means adding VAT to your prices and sending it to the GRA. If you're below the threshold, you don't need to worry about VAT at all.

If you have employees, you'll need to deduct Pay As You Earn (PAYE) tax from their salaries and send it to the GRA each month. You'll also need to make Social Security (SSNIT) contributions for each employee.

There's also withholding tax, which applies when certain payments are made. For example, if a company pays you for services, they may deduct a small percentage and send it to the GRA on your behalf. You'll receive a certificate for this, which you can use to reduce your final tax bill.

Simple Record-Keeping for Tax Purposes

The single most important thing you can do to make tax season easy is to keep good records all year round. This doesn't mean buying expensive software or hiring an accountant full-time. It means being consistent about writing things down.

Keep a simple record of all money coming into your business (sales, payments received) and all money going out (purchases, rent, transport, wages, utilities). Update it every day or at least every week.

Save your receipts. Take photos with your phone if paper receipts get lost easily. The GRA may ask to see evidence of your expenses, and having receipts means you can claim them against your income, which reduces the amount of tax you pay.

At the end of each month, add up your totals. By December, you'll have 12 months of clean records, and preparing your annual tax return will take hours instead of weeks.

How to File Your Taxes and Avoid Penalties

Filing your taxes on time is crucial. The GRA charges penalties for late filing and late payment, and these can add up quickly. The good news is that filing has become much more accessible — you can now file online through the GRA's portal.

If you're not comfortable doing it yourself, work with a tax adviser or accountant. In Ghana, there are many affordable tax practitioners who specialise in small businesses. The cost of hiring one is almost always less than the cost of getting it wrong.

Don't wait until March or April to start thinking about your taxes. If you've been keeping records all year (as we described above), you should be able to file early and avoid the last-minute rush.

Remember: the GRA is not your enemy. They want you to comply, and they've created programmes and helplines to support businesses. If you're unsure about anything, call them or visit your nearest GRA office. It's always better to ask than to guess.