

Hey folks, Bill Fritton with Equity Search. We solve tax problems. Just going to put out a quick video regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and how should be thinking about this as a business, and maybe some useful information. Maybe it's not useful, I don't know. Take a look, see what you think.

First of all, we're going to kind of start out, or I'll start out with the day to day business with the IRS. Right now there's relatively few people working at the IRS. They just recently asked for volunteers of about 10000 people to come back to work to fill essential roles. The IRS employs about 70000 people. So probably there's only at most at this point, 15000 working. If you're trying to get through to them, it's very nearly impossible, on the phone. We have had some success because we have numbers that we use that are kind of back working numbers, and we've had success getting through to them, but for the average person it's going to be nearly impossible.

In terms of what's coming down the road, it's very hard to say. They will obviously reopen, when, nobody knows. It's a very fluid situation. There's new rules, regulations, guidelines that are coming out daily, almost hourly, so we're trying to keep on top of those. One thing, or a couple of things that I would recommend is, do not mail anything to them at this point. If you cannot file it, you need to file electronically. I would hold it for the time being. All that's going to happen now is if you mail it, it will not get opened, it will sit there in huge bags and it may very possibly be lost. If you do absolutely feel as though you need to send it, send it certified return receipt, but not request a signature, otherwise it will be returned, because nobody's there to sign for it.

So if you need to make payments by under no circumstance would I mail a payment at this point, for the very same reasons. If you can and need to, you can make your payment electronically either by going through www.irs.gov or you could go to eftps.gov, set up an account if you haven't already, and make your payments through those mediums.

If your business owes back taxes, there are several things we are thinking about during this time. Again, relatively few people at the IRS. People are in collections, very difficult to get through to automated collection systems. Most of those people are working out of the house, and have very limited access to IRS information, and just based on where they live and the internet bandwidth and their technology, et cetera, what they may be able to accomplish for you. Again, if you need to make a payment on a payment agreement, go to irs.gov or eftps.gov, set up accounts to make electronically. Do not mail.

But from a collection standpoint, if you do owe the IRS, virtually all collection actions have stopped. Garnishments, levies, wage garnishments, bank account garnishments, receivable garnishments, seizures, lien filing, have all been put on hold for the most part until July 15th. The only exceptions may be that if you were dealing with a revenue officer on your case, they may pursue collections, but the revenue officers I've spoke with in the last few weeks are not pursuing anything aggressively right now, so you have a little bit of time to do some planning and get your business back on its feet.

Also, if you are on a payment agreement now, you are not required to make those payments from April 15th through July 15th. The IRS states that will not default your agreement. We'll see what happens. I think it'll be a big mess in the end, but they have stated it will not default your payment agreement, and certainly if your business is shut down or you've furloughed a lot of people, your income is way down and you can't make the payments, then certainly I would not, at least during this time period. If you submitted an offer in compromise, it's going to be a very long time until you hear on that. They're not even looking at those until July 15th, and with the backlog that's going to be there, I would be shocked if you don't hear anything between six months and a year.

So what if you do owe the IRS and your business has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic like most businesses have, whether you're a restaurant, service business, construction worker, anything really, I would think most businesses are being adversely affected. In our opinion, right now, if you owe the IRS

back taxes, it is the perfect time to be planning for what's coming down the road. In our opinion, when the IRS and states get back to business as usual, they are going to be even more aggressive with their collection actions. This entire episode hit both the federal government and states with huge budget deficit and a huge revenue shortfalls and they are going to have to find ways to pay for all the stimulus packages and benefits they are supplying to both businesses and people.

But on the positive side, we believe it'll be an ideal time to cut deals and take advantage of the situation. The offer and compromise program in our belief will probably be expanded. It will probably be easier to get one accepted. At the state level we wouldn't be surprised at all to see amnesty programs like most states had after the 2008, 2009 financial crisis. It may be easier to enter into payment agreements, but now is the time to plan, while your business may be slower and you're not on the treadmill of the day to day operations of your business like most of us find us in when we are busy. Now is the time to plan. If you don't plan now, when business gets back to normal, you ramp up, the IRS gets back to normal, the states get back to normal, they ramp up. If you're not planning now, you're going to be at the back of the line with all the people were are you're trying to do the same thing. So take advantage of the time right now to do your planning.

One thing I would mention that if you presently have an offer and compromise filed, you certainly want to look at the situation of not only your business, but what you think's going to happen down the road. And if you think down the road things may not quite look the same as they did six months ago or a year ago, or you're just not sure what it's going to look like, and you've made an offer that maybe you think might be a little aggressive down the road, you may want to consider with drawing it.

Obviously at equity Search, we're always here to help. Feel free to give us a call anytime you'd like to get some questions answered at (703) 847-6686. We provide a free consultation and feel free to take a look at our website at www.taxdocs.com. That's T-A-X-D-O-C-S, taxdocs.com. Again, my name is Bill Fritton. I will be doing probably at least another video with regards to some of the stimulus packages out there for businesses and what you should be considering before applying or how to use your money on different options, et cetera, and you can look through that. Again, I'm Bill Fritton with Equity Search. Thanks for watching and stay safe. Bye.