

# **Bond Case Briefs**

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## **Webpage Will Provide Updates on TE/GE Compliance Strategies.**

The IRS Tax-Exempt and Government Entities Division is launching a new webpage to keep its stakeholders up to date on its compliance strategies during the fiscal year.

TE/GE officials announced the webpage November 5 during a briefing on the division's [fiscal 2021 program letter](#), which has been transformed from a static document to one designed to more accurately reflect evolving compliance strategies.

The new webpage is part of that approach, acting TE/GE Commissioner Edward Killen explained. It will be easily accessible through links on [irs.gov](#), and TE/GE will announce quarterly updates to the webpage for its communities and stakeholders, he said.

"As initiatives are closed and as we close compliance strategies, we will share the accomplishments and other relevant information that resulted from those efforts," Killen said. He added that the new approach will increase flexibility and transparency and give taxpayers greater insight into TE/GE's activities, "which we feel will support voluntary compliance and stakeholder engagement."

### **Fiscal 2021 Priorities**

TE/GE will continue working with other IRS divisions on syndicated conservation easements, abusive charitable remainder annuity trusts, and other trends, Killen said.

The division will also team up with the Large Business and International Division and the Research, Applied Analytics, and Statistics office to support compliance in the global high-wealth arena in areas of concern to TE/GE, especially regarding private foundations, retirement plans, and closely held businesses like employee stock ownership plans, Killen added.

TE/GE will continue to identify and pursue fraud and will use enhanced techniques to identify and develop civil and criminal fraud cases, including promoter investigation cases, when appropriate, according to the program letter. The division will also recommend criminal prosecution and civil penalties or injunctions against taxpayers or promoters who evade taxes.

According to acting TE/GE Deputy Commissioner Philip Lindenmuth, TE/GE will continue leveraging technology and data analytics to identify areas of noncompliance, detect emerging issues, and help the division allocate its resources for maximum effect and value. And for the first time, TE/GE will use robotic process automation to make processes more efficient and effective, he said.

The division will also be introducing a small-entity compliance initiative to address voluntary compliance challenges faced by small entities, Lindenmuth said.

Implementation of electronic filing of tax-exempt organization forms will continue as well. In fiscal 2021 TE/GE will work on e-filing for forms 990-T, 990-EZ, and 4720, Killen said.

TE/GE expects to launch an online interactive tax assistance tool in December to help taxpayers avoid making excess contributions to their 401(k) plans. There will also be an expansion of taxpayer digital communications, “which offers a secure exchange of messages and documents for taxpayers and their representatives,” Killen said.

### **Erroneous Revocations**

Killen also addressed the IRS’s recent acknowledgment that it mistakenly revoked the tax-exempt status of thousands of nonprofits because of computer issues.

The revocations occurred after the IRS, responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, extended the calendar-year deadline for filing exempt organization information returns to July 15. Because of systemic limitations, the IRS couldn’t update the deadline in the program that automatically issues revocation notices to organizations that have failed to file returns for three straight years. That caused some revocation notices to be issued prematurely.

Killen noted that the IRS immediately took steps to solve the problem, including by making sure that erroneously revoked entities are still listed as exempt and by communicating directly with affected taxpayers.

“Taxpayers should not be adversely impacted by this administrative error,” Killen said.

TAX ANALYSTS

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