

NO TAXPAYER COMPLAINT IS TOO SMALL FOR THE OTO

#TAXPAYERSRIGHTSMATTER

Some taxpayers may be under the impression that the Office of the Tax Ombud (OTO) only assists taxpayers with complaints against the South African Revenue Service (SARS) if there are tax refunds at stake. The case featured in this issue illustrates the OTO's commitment to helping resolve all complaints received, even those many taxpayers might consider insignificant.

Background

In 2021, an executor of a deceased estate requested SARS to correct a passport number on the eFiling system as one digit had been incorrectly captured. Owing to this incorrect information, the executor could not proceed with the required steps to finalise the estate.

Numerous escalations followed and eventually, the executor lodged a complaint with the SARS Complaints Management Office (CMO). After 21 working days had elapsed, the matter was unresolved. A complaint was lodged with the OTO.

How the complaint was resolved

The OTO recommended that the revenue collector correct the error. SARS did so after ensuring that all relevant documents were submitted by the executor and completing the required verification process.

Lesson learnt

Some issues in complaints attended to by the OTO might appear small, but they often have severe consequences if left unattended. Delays by SARS in attending to administrative issues like the one above can cause delays in finalising processes that have an impact on the mourning family members of a deceased taxpayer.

Before approaching the OTO, please remember to exhaust the SARS internal complaints processes.

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