Roadmap to Taxation in Ghana

A Practical Guide to Registration, Tax Types, Incentives & Compliance — 2026 Edition

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This is general information, not tax or legal advice. Rates and thresholds change — always confirm current figures with the GRA or a licensed advisor before filing.

About Forth Ghana

Forth Ghana is a consulting firm that partners with leaders in business, government, and society to tackle complex challenges and unlock long-term value. We work at the intersection of strategy, people and organisation, risk, law, finance, technology, and ESG — bringing clarity to uncertainty and practical solutions to execution.

Our work is grounded in deep local insight, global best practice, and a delivery model that embeds experienced professionals directly within client teams, based in Accra and serving clients across West Africa.

18+ sectors served · **3** delivery models · **7** practice areas

Our purpose and principles

Our purpose is to unlock the potential of those who advance the world. Five principles guide how we do it: clarity in complexity, insight that challenges convention, impact that endures, integrity in action, and growth through others.

Our values

Integrity · Respect for the Individual · Partnership · Client Comes First · Strategic Perspective · Value Delivered · Diversity · Social Impact

What we do

People & Organisation — Workforce strategy, organisational design, leadership development, change management, and workforce compliance.

Risk Management — Enterprise risk, regulatory compliance, governance, ESG risk, fraud, and business continuity.

Law — Embedded lawyers covering corporate, commercial, employment, regulatory, transactional, and dispute matters.

Tax — Compliance, planning, transfer pricing, employment taxes, international tax, and tax risk governance.

Technology — Digital strategy, data and AI, cybersecurity, ERP, automation, and LegalTech/RegTech.

Finance — Corporate and project finance, PPPs, financial modelling, infrastructure, and investment structuring.

ESG — Strategy, climate risk, governance, reporting, sustainable finance, and ESG assurance.

How we work

We flex our delivery to the engagement: **embedded advisors** who integrate fully into a client's team from day one; **project-based support** with defined scope and measurable outcomes; and **on-demand expertise** for rapid access to senior specialists on complex, high-stakes issues.

Why Forth Ghana

- **Deep local insight** — on-the-ground knowledge of Ghana and West Africa, combined with global best practice.
- **Embedded model** — our professionals work within your team, not from a distance.
- **Multi-disciplinary teams** — strategy, law, finance, technology, risk, and ESG under one roof, with no handoffs between firms.
- **Independence and integrity** — conflict-free by design, with your long-term success as our only mandate.
- **Sector breadth** — from agribusiness to fintech, public sector to mining.
- **Measurable impact** — accountable for outcomes, not just outputs.

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1. Getting Started: Tax Registration

Every business and individual earning income above the threshold must register with the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA), even if ultimately exempt from tax.

Requirement	Details
For individuals	Ghana Card, proof of income source
For companies	Corporate tax forms, VAT forms, director resumes, project location photos, stated capital details
Where to register	Nearest GRA district office, or online at taxpayersportal.com
What you get	Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)

Once registered, GRA issues a provisional annual tax assessment based on your business objectives, stated capital, and shareholder nationality.

Who counts as a Ghana tax resident?

- **Individuals** are resident if they spend at least 183 days in Ghana within any rolling 12-month period, are Ghanaian citizens temporarily away for no more than 365 straight days while keeping a permanent home in Ghana, or are government employees posted abroad.
- **Partnerships** are resident for a year if at least one partner lived in Ghana at any point that year.
- **Companies** are resident if incorporated under the Companies Act, 2019 (Act 992), or if managed and controlled from Ghana at any time in the year. A Ghanaian permanent establishment (branch) is treated as a resident company for income tax purposes.
- Anyone who doesn't meet these tests is a **non-resident**.

Residents are taxed on worldwide income; non-residents are taxed only on Ghana-sourced income (income accrued in or derived from Ghana).

2. Personal Income Tax (PIT)

Anyone earning more than **GHS 490/month (GHS 5,880/year)** is liable for income tax. Chargeable income is total income from business, employment, and investment for the year, less allowable deductions.

Resident individual tax bands (annual, 2026):

Chargeable income (GHS)	Rate
First 5,880	0%
Next 1,320	5%
Next 1,560	10%
Next 38,000	17.5%
Next 192,000	25%
Next 366,240	30%
Above 605,000	35%

Non-residents pay a **flat 25%** on Ghana-sourced income.

Personal reliefs: individuals who qualify can claim reliefs ranging from **GHS 600 to GHS 2,000** depending on category (see Section 3). Persons with disabilities can instead claim **25% of non-investment assessable income** as relief.

Three-tier pension contributions

Ghana's retirement system has three tiers, and contributions to all of them reduce taxable income:

Tier	Nature	Contribution
Tier 1	Mandatory basic social security (SSNIT)	13.5% combined (employer + employee)
Tier 2	Mandatory, privately-managed occupational pension	5% (employer-funded)
Tier 3	Voluntary, privately-managed provident fund/personal pension	Exempt up to 16.5% of basic salary

Overall, the standard mandatory split is **employer 13% + employee 5.5% = 18.5%** of salary, remitted to SSNIT and an approved trustee. Employers must remit contributions within 14 days of month-end. Qualifying contributions to both mandatory and voluntary schemes are tax-exempt.

Mortgage interest on a loan used to build or buy **one** residential property may also be deducted from the individual's income.

Non-cash benefits

Non-cash benefits are valued at market value and taxed unless specifically exempt. Accommodation and vehicle benefits are valued as a percentage of Total Cash Emoluments (TCE), with monthly caps:

Benefit	Value	Monthly cap
Accommodation with furnishings	10% of TCE	—
Accommodation only	7.5% of TCE	—
Furnishings only	2.5% of TCE	—
Shared accommodation	2.5% of TCE	—
Fuelled vehicle with driver	12.5% of TCE	GHS 1,500/month
Vehicle with fuel	10% of TCE	GHS 1,250/month
Vehicle only	5% of TCE	GHS 625/month
Fuel only	5% of TCE	GHS 625/month

Interest on a concessionary (below-market) loan from an employer can also count as a taxable benefit.

What's generally NOT taxable

- Reimbursement of genuine business costs
- Employer-paid dental, medical, or health insurance available equally to all full-time staff
- Relocation costs for hiring a non-resident to work in Ghana (conditions apply)
- On-site housing provided by employers in timber, mining, construction, farming, or petroleum operations
- Payments too small, irregular, or impractical for the employer to track per individual
- Redundancy pay and pensions
- Compensation/gratuity for personal injury or death
- Interest paid to an individual by a resident financial institution or on Government of Ghana bonds
- Interest/dividends from an approved unit trust or mutual fund

Overtime, bonuses, and casual/temporary staff

- Bonuses up to 15% of annual basic salary are taxed at a final 5%; anything above that is taxed at the normal graduated rates.
- Junior staff overtime up to 50% of monthly basic pay (where annual income ≤ GHS 18,000) is taxed at 5%; the excess is taxed at 10%.

- Non-resident bonus/overtime is taxed at a flat 20%.
- Casual workers are subject to a final 5% withholding tax; temporary workers are taxed at ordinary individual rates.

PAYE administration

Employers withhold tax at source (PAYE) and remit it to GRA by the **15th of the following month**. Employers must also file an **Employer's Annual Tax Deduction Schedule** within four months of year-end, showing pay and tax withheld per employee.

Individuals whose only income is from one business may elect the **presumptive tax scheme**, paying tax based on instalments or turnover instead of standard assessment. The tax year for individuals and partnerships is the calendar year.

3. Personal Tax Reliefs

Relief	Annual amount (GHS)
Marriage/responsibility	1,200
Child education (max 3 children)	600 per child
Disability	25% of business/employment income
Old age (60+)	1,500
Aged dependent (max 2 relatives)	1,000 per relative
Education/professional training	2,000
Mortgage interest	Actual qualifying interest

4. Corporate Income Tax (CIT)

Entity/activity	Rate
Companies — general	25%
Companies in mining or upstream petroleum	35%
Lottery/gaming operators	20% of gross gaming revenue

Minimum chargeable income: companies (other than farming businesses and those in their first 5 years) that report losses for 5 consecutive years of assessment may be taxed on a deemed 5% of turnover instead.

Basis period: the year of assessment is the calendar year, but a company may choose its own accounting year — once chosen, it can only be changed with written GRA approval.

Deductions

Expenses incurred wholly, exclusively, and necessarily to produce income are deductible, including: capital allowances, bad debts (conditions apply), tax losses brought forward, certain repairs/improvements, losses on realisation of business/investment assets, incentives for hiring recent graduates, and certain financing costs. Capital-nature and non-business expenses are generally not deductible.

Capital allowances

Class	Assets	Rate	Basis
1	Computers and data-handling equipment	40%	Reducing balance
2	Vehicles, construction/earthmoving equipment, manufacturing plant & machinery, plantation capital expenditure	30%	Reducing balance
3	Locomotives, water transport, aircraft, office furniture/fixtures, other equipment	20%	Reducing balance
4	Buildings, structures, and permanent works	10%	Straight-line
5	Intangible assets	Over useful life	—

Importers/manufacturers of excisable goods get a 50% straight-line allowance on machinery bought for affixing excise tax stamps. Tax losses can be carried forward for **5 years**.

Mineral royalties

Holders of mining leases and licences pay royalties on production. Since March 2026, price-linked royalties of **5%–12%** apply to non-small-scale gold and lithium spodumene operations, while small-scale gold attracts **2%**. Other minerals (diamond, bauxite, manganese, salt, industrial minerals, limestone, iron ore) attract a flat **5%**. Royalties are due within 15 days of month-end, with annual production returns and a 30-day year-end reconciliation.

Ring-fencing and dividends

Financial institutions and petroleum/mineral operators must calculate chargeable income **separately for each financial service, petroleum right, or mineral operation** — losses in one can't offset profits in another.

Dividends paid by a resident company are generally subject to a **final 8% withholding tax**, unless exempt or reduced by a tax treaty.

Change in control, gifts, and asset realisation

- If more than 50% of a company's ownership changes within a 3-year window, the entity is deemed to have disposed of and reacquired its assets/liabilities at market value, and pre-change losses, bad debts, and financing costs become non-deductible after the change.
- Gifts received in connection with a business or investment are taxed as ordinary income at the applicable corporate rate.
- Gains/losses on realising business or investment assets are taxed as income; a return must be filed within 30 days of the realisation.

Sector-specific rules

- **Telecoms/transportation:** non-residents earning from transmitting messages via cable, satellite, etc. into Ghana, or from carrying passengers/cargo embarked in Ghana, face a **15% final withholding tax**.
- **Banking:** banks must track banking income/losses separately from other activities; specific bad-debt provisions are deductible if GRA is satisfied they're genuine.
- **Financial Sector Recovery Levy:** a quarterly levy of **5% of profit before tax**, applicable to banks (excluding rural/community banks).
- **Insurance — general business:** taxed on premiums/proceeds received plus unexpired-risk reserves released, less proceeds and reinsurance premiums paid and the new unexpired-risk reserve.
- **Insurance — life business:** premiums and proceeds are excluded from income (and from asset/liability cost) entirely; the ordinary corporate rate applies to what remains.
- **Insurance premiums withholding:** premiums to resident insurers are exempt from withholding; premiums to non-residents for Ghana-sourced risk attract **5%** withholding.
- **Retirement funds:** contributions received are tax-exempt; payments made out are not deductible.

5. Growth and Sustainability Levy (GSL)

A quarterly levy on profit before tax (PBT) or gross production, running through **2028**:

Category	Who	Rate
A	Banks, non-bank financial institutions, insurers, telcos, breweries, mining-support firms, bulk oil distributors, oil marketing companies, communication tower operators, upstream petroleum service firms, SEC-registered entities, specialised deposit-takers, e-money issuers, shipping/maritime/airport terminals	5% of PBT
B	Gold mining companies	3% of gross production
B	Other mining and upstream oil & gas companies	1% of gross production
C	All other entities	2.5% of PBT

6. Tax Incentives & Exemptions

Incentive	Who qualifies	Benefit
Free-zone developers/enterprises	Registered free-zone entities	10-year income tax holiday; 15% on export income after, 25% on other non-exempt income
Young entrepreneurs	Qualifying sectors	Tax-exempt for 5 years, then up to 15% for the next 5 (location-dependent), then up to 25%; losses carry forward 5 years
Private universities	100% of after-tax profit reinvested	Full corporate tax exemption
Automobile manufacturers/assemblers	Registered under the Ghana Automotive Manufacturing Development Programme	Tax exemption for 3–10 years (conditions apply)
Lottery operators	Lotto, sports betting, casino, route, and other games-of-chance operators	Taxed at 20% of gross gaming revenue instead of standard CIT

7. Withholding Tax

Resident persons:

Payment type	Rate
Interest (excl. individuals & resident financial institutions)	8%
Dividends	8%
Rent — residential property	8%
Rent — non-residential property	15%
Fees to resident invigilators, examiners, part-time teachers/lecturers; endorsement fees	10%
Fees/allowances to resident directors, managers, board members, trustees	20%
Commission to insurance, sales, canvassing, lotto agents (individuals)	10%
Supply of goods over GHS 2,000/year	3%
Supply of works over GHS 2,000/year	5%

Supply of services by an entity over GHS 2,000/year	7.5%
Supply of general services by an individual	7.5%
Payments to petroleum subcontractors	7.5%
Unprocessed rough diamonds	1.5%
Royalties, natural resource payments	15%
Realisation of assets/liabilities	3%

Non-resident persons:

Payment type	Rate
Dividends	8%
Royalties, natural resource payments, rents	15%
Management and technical service fees	20%
Goods, works, or services	20%
Repatriated branch after-tax profits	8%
Interest income (excl. individuals)	8%
General insurance premiums	5%
Telecommunications/transportation income	15%
Payments to petroleum subcontractors	15%
Realisation of assets/liabilities	10%

Taxpayers registered on the GRA Taxpayer Portal can download withholding tax credit certificates once the withholding agent files and pays through the portal.

Exempt income

- Life insurance gains paid by a resident insurer
- Non-resident shipping/aircraft operators' income, where Ghana gets reciprocal treatment from that country
- Dividends between resident companies where the recipient holds ≥25% of the payer's voting power (with some sector exceptions)
- Interest/dividends to holders of an approved unit trust or mutual fund
- Interest and gains for non-residents on Government of Ghana bonds
- Income of an approved unit trust, mutual fund, or Real Estate Investment Trust

8. International Tax

A Ghanaian permanent establishment (PE) is taxed as if it were a separate resident company; a foreign PE's foreign income is exempt from Ghanaian tax. A branch's net profit is deemed repatriated and subject to a **final 8% branch profit tax**.

Resident persons (other than partnerships) can claim a **foreign tax credit** for tax paid abroad on foreign-sourced income that's also taxed in Ghana.

Double tax treaty withholding rates (selected)

Country	Dividends (≥10–25% holding)	Dividends (other)	Royalties	Technical/mgmt fees	Interest
France	7.5%	15.0%	12.5%	10.0%	12.5%
United Kingdom	7.5%	15.0%	12.5%	10.0%	12.5%
Germany	5.0%	15.0%	8.0%	8.0%	10.0%
South Africa	5.0%	15.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Belgium	5.0%	15.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Italy	5.0%	15.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Netherlands	5.0%	10.0%	8.0%	8.0%	8.0%
Switzerland	5.0%	15.0%	8.0%	8.0%	10.0%
Denmark	5.0%	15.0%	8.0%	8.0%	8.0%
Singapore	7.0%	7.0%	7.0%	10.0%	7.0%
Mauritius	7.0%	7.0%	8.0%	10.0%	7.0%
Czech Republic	6.0%	6.0%	8.0%	8.0%	10.0%
Morocco	5.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Qatar	5.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%

A handful of newer treaties (Ireland, Malta, Norway, Barbados, Luxembourg, Seychelles, Iran) have been signed but are **not yet in force**.

9. Anti-Avoidance Rules

- **Income splitting** — shifting income or assets to an associate to cut the group's combined tax bill — is not permitted.
- **Transfer pricing:** transactions between related/controlled parties (25%+ common ownership, management, or control) must be priced at arm's length, using OECD-aligned methods. Affected taxpayers must file an annual transfer pricing return, a Country-by-Country report (where applicable), and supporting Master File/Local File documentation. Employer-employee transactions are excluded.
- **Thin capitalisation:** a company is "thinly capitalised" if an exempt person owns/controls at least 50% of it and its debt-to-equity ratio exceeds 3:1 — interest deductions can be restricted as a result. This rule doesn't apply to financial institutions.

10. Value Added Tax, NHIL & GETFund Levy

VAT, the National Health Insurance Levy (NHIL), and the GETFund Levy (GETFL) apply to taxable supplies of goods and services made in Ghana, plus imports.

- **Standard VAT:** 15%, plus NHIL 2.5% and GETFL 2.5% — all charged on the same base (no cascading), for a combined **20%**.
- **Goods registration threshold:** GHS 750,000 over 12 months (or the quarterly equivalent).
- **Services:** no threshold — all service providers must register within 30 days of starting.
- **Group registration** is available with GRA approval.
- Businesses can appoint a **tax representative** for GRA dealings, subject to approval.
- VAT-registered persons must issue invoices through the **Certified Invoicing System (CIS)**, integrated with GRA's own system.

Exempt supplies (selected)

Agricultural inputs; unbottled water; residential electricity; local textbooks/newspapers/maps; education services and related lab/library equipment; medical services and supplies; certain pharmaceuticals; domestic transport (excluding air); specified machinery; crude oil and hydrocarbon products; dwelling accommodation and agricultural/civil-engineering land; goods for people with disabilities; financial services (except non-life insurance other than motor); imported plant/machinery/kits for automobile manufacturing (conditions apply); imported electric vehicles for public transport.

Recovery, withholding, and imports

- Input VAT/NHIL/GETFL on business purchases can generally be recovered, but claims must be made within **6 months**.
- Appointed **VAT withholding agents** withhold 7% of the taxable output value on standard-rated supplies and issue a Withholding VAT Credit Certificate.
- VAT-registrable-but-unregistered importers must pay **20% of the customs value** upfront at the port; this is recoverable once they register, file a return, and apply, with evidence of the upfront payment.

Returns and refunds

Monthly VAT/NHIL/GETFL returns and payment are due by the **last working day of the following month**. Imported-services VAT is due within 21 days of the month of import; import VAT on goods is paid alongside customs duty. Withholding VAT returns and payment are due by the **15th** of the following month. Refund claims are available but must meet the legislation's conditions.

Penalties

Offence	Penalty
Failure to register	At least 3× the tax on taxable supplies until registration is filed
Failure to issue proper tax invoices	Up to GHS 1,200
Non-compliance with Certified Invoicing System	Up to GHS 50,000 or 3× the tax involved (whichever is higher), plus the invoice penalty
Late filing of VAT return	GHS 500 + GHS 10/day
Invalid refund claim	2× the claimed amount, plus interest
Late payment of tax	125% of the Bank of Ghana policy rate, compounded monthly
Failure to withhold/remit VAT	30% of the amount due, plus the unremitted VAT

11. Communication Service Tax (CST)

CST applies at **5%** to charges for electronic communication services (calls, data, interconnection, recharges, promotions/bonuses) provided under the Electronic Communications Act, 2008. Providers collect and remit monthly, with returns due by the **last working day of the following month**. Late filing draws a GHS 2,000 penalty plus GHS 500/day; late remittance draws interest at 125% of the statutory rate.

12. Special Petroleum Tax

Licensed oil marketing companies charge a per-litre/per-kg special petroleum tax on petrol, diesel, LPG, natural petroleum gas, and kerosene. It's remitted to GRA by the last working day of the month following the transaction.

13. Customs, Excise & Trade Levies

Ghana applies the **Common External Tariff (CET)** for customs duties (since 2016).

Charge	Rate	Notes
Import duty	0%–35%	On CIF value, by item classification
VAT + NHIL + GETFL on imports	20% combined	On CIF value + customs duty
Special import levy	2%	Expires December 2028
African Union import levy	0.2%	On imports from non-AU states
ECOWAS levy	0.5%	On imports from non-ECOWAS states
Export & Import (EXIM) levy	0.75%	On all imports; funds EXIM Bank and Export Promotion Authority
Administrative charges	0.4%–3.45%	Applies regardless of duty exemptions
Export duty	0% (generally)	Some goods excepted
Environmental excise tax	5%	Specified plastic/plastic products
Airport tax	GHS 5 (local) / USD 60–200 (international)	Per traveller

Excise duty applies to specific goods (beer, spirits, tobacco, e-cigarettes) manufactured in or imported into Ghana, and excise tax stamps must be affixed to items like tobacco, alcoholic/carbonated drinks, and bottled water before sale. Diplomatic missions and businesses in mining, oil & gas, and free zones may qualify for import duty concessions.

14. Filing, Payment & Appeals

Obligation	Deadline
PAYE return & payment	15th of following month
Withholding tax (general)	Within 15 days after month-end
VAT, NHIL, GETFund	Last working day of following month
VAT on imported services	21st of following month
Communication Service Tax	Last working day of following month
Tax stamp / vehicle income tax	15 Jan, 15 Apr, 15 Jul, 15 Oct
Company income tax instalments	End of 3rd, 6th, 9th, 12th months of basis period
Annual return of income	4 months after end of accounting period
Employer's Annual Tax Deduction Schedule	4 months after calendar year-end

A **statement of estimated tax** is due alongside the first instalment for anyone paying tax in instalments. Extensions to file (up to 60 days beyond the original due date) can be requested from the Commissioner-General. Non-resident persons and resident individuals with no tax payable for the year aren't required to file a return unless GRA asks.

Penalties: late general filing = GHS 500 + GHS 10/day of delay. Late payment attracts compounded interest at 125% of the statutory rate.

Disputes: taxpayers who disagree with a GRA objection decision can appeal to the **Independent Tax Appeals Board (ITAB)**, an independent forum created under the Revenue Administration Act, 2016. Appeals require a filing fee and a Notice and Memorandum of Appeal within set deadlines; ITAB decisions can be further appealed to the courts.

15. Compliance Checklist

- [ ] Register immediately — get your TIN before earning taxable income
- [ ] Confirm your residency status and which income is taxable in Ghana
- [ ] Keep proper records — invoices, receipts, bank statements, payroll
- [ ] File on time via the GRA Taxpayers' Portal
- [ ] Pay CIT in 4 equal quarterly instalments (companies)
- [ ] Withhold correctly on contractor, rent, dividend, and cross-border payments
- [ ] Claim all reliefs and capital allowances you're entitled to
- [ ] Check transfer pricing and thin capitalisation exposure for related-party dealings
- [ ] Document and report carried-forward losses properly
- [ ] Stay current — tax law changes frequently (e.g., 2026 mineral royalty and VAT reforms)

16. Useful Resources

- GRA Official Portal: gra.gov.gh
- Online Filing & Payments: taxpayersportal.com
- Government Services: ghana.gov
- Key laws: Income Tax Act 2015 (Act 896), VAT Act 2025 (Act 1151), Growth and Sustainability Levy Act 2023 (Act 1095), Revenue Administration Act 2016 (Act 915), Companies Act 2019 (Act 992)