CHAN CPA & COMPANY, INC.

Business, Financial, & Tax Services

JUNE 2018 NEWSLETTER

Tax filing reminder

June 15 – The second installment of 2018 individual estimated tax is due.

It's tax-planning time

Now is the ideal time to think about tax-planning, and it's early enough in the year to make corrective action to take advantage of the numerous new tax law changes taking place in 2018.

We strongly recommend you take advantage of Diana's complimentary 30 minute summer meetings. During this half hour, Diana can answer whatever questions you have and run through general tax numbers. Please call our office to schedule your meeting as dates/times are limited (first come first serve basis), and these complimentary meetings are only offered between July 2nd and August 17th, 2018.

Here's a brief overview of some of the new tax issues that you may need to plan for now.

#1 Income

Tax rates for both individuals and small businesses have changed substantially. Income tax deductions have also changed drastically, including a near doubling of the standard deduction and the elimination of most personal exemptions and miscellaneous itemized deductions.

You need to review your income tax withholding schedule and see where you fall in the new income tax bracket structure. Small adjustments here could save you hundreds.

#2 Bunching

Because of the changes to the deductions structure, using itemized deductions may entail bunching two or even three years of expenses into one tax year. Things like donations to charity and medical expenses that you may have spread across several years are now better bunched into a single year to maximize your tax savings.

If you typically take care of medical expenses or charitable donations at a regular time every year, stop until you have a new tax-efficient plan. If you wish to consider a bunching approach to itemizing, you'll want to make that decision as early in the year as possible.

#3 SALT (State and local taxes)

There's now a $10,000 combined total cap on deductions of state and local income, sales and property taxes, which is going to impact a lot of people, especially in high-tax states. This may be a big factor to account for if you've relied on this deduction in the past.

Get an analysis done to see how much larger your tax bill is going to be because of the cap on SALT taxes. There may not be much you can do about it other than changing where you live and own property, but you'll need to have a clear picture of how it will impact your tax return in 2018.

#4 Mortgage interest changes

There are several new rules changing how mortgage interest is deducted. You can now no longer deduct the interest cost on mortgage indebtedness greater than $750,000. And you can no longer deduct interest on mortgage indebtedness that wasn't spent directly on buying, building or substantially improving your home.

If you have used a home equity loan interest deduction, you'll need to review how this will impact your itemized deductions.

These are just a few examples of things that you'll need to review in the wake of the largest tax law changes in more than 30 years. Take some time this summer to make sure you have a plan in place.

The Trinity Building **(Ph) 408-358-1591**
16450 Los Gatos Blvd. Suite 101 **(Fax) 408-356-1481**
Los Gatos, CA 95032 **www.chancpa.com**

CHAN CPA & COMPANY, INC.

Six tax benefits of owning a home

If you own or are considering owning a home, you can take advantage of many tax benefits. Here are six of the most commonly used homeowner's tax breaks:

1. Mortgage interest deduction. You can deduct the interest you pay on your monthly mortgage bill when you itemize deductions on your tax return. This can be a huge benefit, especially in the early years of a mortgage. That's because typically about 80 percent of your mortgage bill in your first year of home ownership on a 30-year mortgage goes toward interest. Principal payments don't exceed interest until year 18 of your mortgage.
Note: This benefit is capped to apply to $750,000 in indebtedness for new loans taken in 2018 ($1 million for loans taken out in 2017 or earlier).

2. Property tax deductions. You can deduct up to $10,000 in combined state and local taxes. Called the SALT deduction, this can be used to deduct local property taxes, state taxes, local income taxes and sales taxes.

3. Closing cost deductions. You can deduct the closing costs of a home purchase in the year you buy it. This includes things like mortgage discount points you pay upfront to lower your interest rate over the life of your loan. Because each point costs 1 percent of your total mortgage amount, the tax deduction on these costs can be substantial.

4. Home improvement tax breaks. If you take out a second mortgage or what is commonly called a home equity mortgage and use it to buy, build or substantially improve your home, you can deduct the interest on that loan from your taxes. This feature is now grouped into your total mortgage indebtedness, which is capped at $750,000.
Caution: Interest on home equity loans used for any other means (e.g., to pay down credit card debt or to purchase a car) is no longer deductible.

5. Energy efficiency tax breaks. There are special tax breaks available for renewable energy and energy-efficiency upgrades to your house:
a. The cost to buy and install solar, wind and geothermal equipment to your main residence or a second home can be deducted by 30 percent.
b. Energy-efficient upgrades can be deducted by 100 percent for items such as central air conditioning, furnaces and water heaters, capped at a total of $500.

6. Capital gains exclusion. You have the ability to exclude up to $250,000 of profits (or $500,000 if you are married) from the sale of your home, as long as it's your primary residence and you've lived there at least two years.

Remember, if you're thinking of buying a home, you may want to make a tax review part of your preparation. Because the tax deductions on mortgage interest and points can be so substantial in the early years of home ownership, they may factor in to how much you can afford.

CHAN CPA & COMPANY, INC.

Entity Reminder

California law requires all corporations, limited liability companies, and common interest development associations to update the records of the California Secretary of State either every year or every two years (based on year of registration) by filing a statement, as described below.
Failure to file the required Statement of Information with the Secretary of State may result in penalties being assessed by the Franchise Tax Board and suspension or forfeiture.

Limited Liability Companies must file a complete Statement of Information (Form LLC-12) within the first 90 days of filing the Articles of Organization or Application to Register, after which a Statement of Information is due every two years (every odd year or every even year based on year of initial registration).
Domestic stock and agricultural cooperative corporations must file a complete Statement of Information (Form SI-550) within the first 90 days of filing the Articles of Incorporation, after which a Statement of Information is due every year.
Domestic nonprofit corporations must file a complete Statement of Information (Form SI-100) within the first 90 days of filing the Articles of Incorporation, after which a Statement of Information is due every two years (every odd year or every even year based on year of initial registration).
Foreign corporations must file a complete Statement of Information (Form SI-550) within the first 90 days of filing the Statement and Designation by Foreign Corporation, after which a Statement of Information is due every year.

Thought for the month:
Challenges make life interesting; overcoming them is what makes life meaningful. Joshua Marine