[Insert DD Month YYYY]

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|  |

[Insert Client Name]

[Insert Client Position]

[Insert Company Name]

[Insert Client Address]

[Suburb State Postcode]

Dear [Insert Client Name]

**Re:** **2021 Client Substantiation Declaration – Individual tax return**

We thank you for allowing us the opportunity to assist you with the preparation of your income tax return for the year ended 30 June 2021.

Please find attached a client substantiation declaration which you are required to complete to confirm that you have retained original receipts and other documentation which can substantiate any deductions claimed for work, car and business travel expenses as required under the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.* The declaration also confirms that your income tax return has otherwise been correctly prepared based on the relevant information you have provided us.

Where you had to work from home because of COVID-19, the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) allows a temporary shortcut method to simplify the calculation of the deduction for working from home expenses with minimal record keeping requirements. If you use the shortcut method, you can claim a deduction of 80 cents for each hour you worked from home for the period between 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021. It is important to note that the shortcut method covers all additional deductible running expenses, including but not limited to internet costs, phone costs and depreciation on furniture/equipment.

We advise that your completion of the substantiation declaration is important as the ATO may scrutinise income tax returns to ensure that they are correctly prepared, particularly to ensure that work-related expense claims are both allowable and can be substantiated.

As your registered tax agent, we are required to demonstrate reasonable care in correctly ascertaining a client’s state of affairs under section 30-10(9) of the *Tax Agent Services Act 2009*. When providing taxation services involving a statement being made to the Commissioner or something else being done on behalf of a client, a registered tax agent must therefore take reasonable care in ascertaining the facts around their client’s affairs that are relevant to the service being provided.

Accordingly, as a matter of good practice we need to alert clients of their responsibilities to retain the required documentation to ensure that we can correctly prepare your income tax return and that claims for any work-related expenses can be appropriately substantiated. In the event of a review or audit by the ATO resulting in a denial of deductions, you will be liable for additional tax, interest and penalties and may be subject to prosecution.

We would therefore be grateful if you could please either review and sign the attached Substantiation Declaration and forward it back to us via mail, or alternatively forward us an email acknowledging that you have reviewed and agree with the terms of the attached Substantiation Declaration.

We appreciate your support and the opportunity to be of service to you.

If you have further queries on any details contained within this letter or on any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact me on [insert telephone number].

Yours faithfully,

[Insert partner name]

Encl.

**2021 CLIENT SUBSTANTIATION DECLARATION**

I confirm that I must demonstrate that I have incurred certain expenses in the course of deriving salary and wages income, and that you have advised me that I must satisfy the substantiation requirements in the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997* in relation to claims for work, car and business travel expenses.

In particular, I have been informed by you of the need to OBTAIN ORIGINAL RECEIPTS for deductions claimed for such expenses and keep them for a minimum of five years from the date my return is lodged.

The receipts must contain the following details:

* name of the supplier
* amount of expense
* nature of goods and services (noting the specific type of items purchased or expenditure incurred which I am able to personally record up to the date of lodgement of my return where not adequately noted by the supplier)
* date of expense (which I am able to personally record when not noted by the supplier) and
* date of the document.

**Working from home records**

You must keep a record of the hours you have worked from home. This could be a:

* timesheet
* roster
* diary or
* similar document that shows the hours you worked.

If you use methods other than the shortcut method, you must also keep a record of the number of hours you worked from home along with a record of your expenses.

**Penalties in respect of incorrect returns**

You have also advised me of the additional tax, penalty charge, general interest charge and possible prosecution action which could be initiated by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) if I lodge an incorrect tax return, including the claiming of tax deductions for amounts which are not allowable for income tax purposes.

In addition, you have informed me that an important feature of the tax agent services regime is the provision of a safe harbour protection from penalties for taxpayers who engage a registered tax agent. You have advised me that in order to obtain the benefits of such safe harbour protection, I must provide you with all relevant taxation information to enable accurate statements to be provided to the ATO.

**Income from all sources in and out of Australia for the year of income**

You have advised me that I must declare income from all sources, in and out of Australia, including any net capital gains on disposals of both Australian and foreign assets occurring during the year of income, in my return.

**Apportionment**

Where items are used for both business and private purposes (e.g. car, mobile telephone and computer costs), I have kept appropriate apportionment documents to verify my business usage claim. I also confirm that my employer will acknowledge that it was necessary for me to incur such expenditure in earning my income.

**ATO review and/or audit matters**

I further confirm that:

* I may be required to verify any income or expense item noted in my return in the event of an ATO review and/or audit.
* I must substantiate all work, car and travel expense claims under self-assessment.
* I have read and understood the return prepared for me.

**I declare that**:

* I have disclosed and you have returned all income, including net capital gains, which I have earned or received for the 2020-21income year.
* All the claims for deductions and tax offsets which have been included in the return are based on my specific instructions and advice that I satisfy the relevant taxation requirements.
* I have all receipts or documentation necessary to substantiate the above claims which I will make available if required by the ATO.
* You have clarified what written evidence (including car/travel records) will be required during an ATO review or audit and that penalties (including prosecution) may be applied if incorrect claims are identified in an ATO review or audit.

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