



The Vita Viewpoint Important Information for Decision Makers

DOL Extends Deadline for Filing 1999 Form 5500

New Deadline

- October 16, 2000 is the new deadline for 1999 Form 5500 returns that would otherwise be due on or before July 31, 2000.

No 5558 Extension Filing Required

- Normally an employer would need to file a Form 5558 extension application to extend a deadline. However, this extension is automatic for all returns due on or before July 31, 2000. No 5558 extension application or other documentation is required to take advantage of the extension.

The Reason

- The DOL has implemented the ERISA Filing Acceptance System (EFAST) which will allow for more efficient processing of the 5500 information. The year 2000 is considered a "transition year" as implementation has been delayed.
- The launch of the EFAST system includes a software certification process for all vendors producing 5500 compliance software. Due to strict guidelines for the software and a backup in the approval process, many software vendors have not received certification of software yet.
- Ultimately, the EFAST system will require all filers to utilize electronic filing or use of official computer scannable forms. However for 2000, they have indicated that they will not reject a form for not being generated in an EFAST approved format.

Implementation at Vita

- Our software vendor has indicated they expect approval by late April 2000 and will ship new versions shortly thereafter.
- Therefore, despite normally turning around all Form 5500s within 30 days of receiving your information sheet, this year we expect to have 5500s prepared by late May 2000.
- In all cases, your information sheets are still due to Vita by May 31, 2000. If we do not receive your data sheet by May 31, 2000, we will assume you are handling the preparation of your 5500s internally or through another source.

For questions or additional information, please contact Vita Planning Group at (650) 968-8811.