F. No. CBEC/20/16/04/2018-GST
Government of India
Ministry of Finance
Department of Revenue
Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs
GST Policy Wing

New Delhi, Dated the 26th October, 2018

To,

The Principal Chief Commissioners/Chief Commissioners/Principal Commissioners/ Commissioners of Central Tax (All)

The Principal Directors General/Directors General (All)

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Madam/Sir,

Subject: Processing of Applications for Cancellation of Registration submitted in FORM GST REG-16 - Reg.

The Board is in receipt of representations seeking clarifications on various issues in relation to processing of the applications for cancellation of registration filed by taxpayers in **FORM GST REG-16**. In order to clarify these issues and to ensure uniformity in the implementation of the provisions of law across the field formations, the Board, in exercise of its powers conferred by section 168 (1) of the Central Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017 (hereinafter referred to as the "CGST Act"), hereby clarifies the issues as detailed hereunder:

2. Section 29 of the CGST Act, read with rule 20 of the Central Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017 (hereinafter referred to as the "CGST Rules") provides that a taxpayer can apply for cancellation of registration in **FORM GST REG-16** in the following circumstances:

a. Discontinuance of business or closure of business;

b. Transfer of business on account of amalgamation, merger, de-merger, sale, lease or otherwise;

c. Change in constitution of business leading to change in PAN;

d. Taxable person (including those who have taken voluntary registration) is no longer liable to be registered under GST;

e. Death of sole proprietor;

f. Any other reason (*to be specified in the application*).

3. Rule 20 of the CGST Rules provides that the taxpayer applying for cancellation of registration shall submit the application in **FORM GST REG-16** on the common portal within a period of 30 days of the *'occurrence of the event warranting the cancellation'*. It might be difficult in some cases to exactly identify or pinpoint the day on which such an event occurs. For instance, a business may be transferred/disposed over a period of time in a piece meal fashion. In such cases, the 30-day deadline may be liberally interpreted and the taxpayers' application for cancellation of registration may not be rejected because of the possible violation of the deadline.

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4. While initiating the application for cancellation of registration in **FORM GST REG-16,** the Common portal captures the following information which has to be mandatorily filled in by the applicant:

a) Address for future correspondence with mobile number and email address;

b) Reason for cancellation;

c) Date from which cancellation is sought;

d) Details of the value and the input tax/tax payable on the stock of inputs, inputs contained in semi-finished goods, inputs contained in finished goods, stock of capital goods/plant and machinery;

e) In case of transfer, merger of business, etc., particulars of registration of the entity in which the existing unit has been merged, amalgamated, or transferred (including the copy of the order of the High Court / transfer deed);

f) Details of the last return filed by the taxpayer along with the ARN of such return filed.

On successful submission of the cancellation application, the same appears on the dashboard of the jurisdictional officer.

5. Since the cancellation of registration has no effect on the liability of the taxpayer for any acts of commission/omission committed before or after the date of cancellation, the

proper officer should accept all such applications within a period of 30 days from the date of filing the application, except in the following circumstances:

a) The application in **FORM GST REG-16** is incomplete, i.e. where all the relevant particulars, as detailed in para 4 above, have not been entered;

b) In case of transfer, merger or amalgamation of business, the new entity in which the applicant proposes to amalgamate or merge has not got registered with the tax authority before submission of the application for cancellation.

In all cases other than those listed at (a) and (b) above, the application for cancellation of registration should be immediately accepted by the proper officer and the order for cancellation should be issued in **FORM GST REG-19** with the effective date of cancellation being the same as the date from which the applicant has sought cancellation in **FORM GST REG-16.** In any case the effective date cannot be a date earlier to the date of application for the same.

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6. In situations referred to in (a) or (b) in para 5 above, the proper officer shall inform the applicant in writing about the nature of the discrepancy and give a time period of seven working days to the taxpayer, from the date of receipt of the said letter, to reply. If no reply is received within the specified period of seven working days, the proper officer may reject the application on the system, after giving the applicant an opportunity to be heard, recording reasons for rejection in the dialog box that opens once the 'Reject' button is chosen. If reply to the query is received and the same on examination is found satisfactory, the Proper Officer may approve the application for cancellation and proceed to cancel the registration by issuing an order in **FORM GST REG-19**. If reply to the query is found to be not satisfactory, the Proper Officer may reject the application for cancellation on the system, after giving the applicant an opportunity to be heard. The Proper Officer must also record his reasons for rejection of the application in the dialog box that opens when the 'Reject' button is chosen.

7. Section 45 of the CGST Act requires every registered person (other than an Input Service Distributor or a non-resident taxable person or a person paying tax under the provisions of section 10 or section 51 or section 52) whose registration has been cancelled, to file a final return in **FORM GSTR-10**, within three months of the effective date of cancellation or the date of order of cancellation, whichever is later. The purpose of the final return is to ensure that the taxpayer discharges any liability that he/she may have incurred under sub-section (5) of the section 29 of the CGST Act. It may be noted that the last date for furnishing of **FORM GSTR-10** by those taxpayers whose registration has been cancelled on

or before 30.09.2018 has been extended till 31.12.2018 *vide* notification No. 58/2018 – Central Tax dated the 26th October, 2018.

8. Further, sub-section (5) of section 29 of the CGST Act, read with rule 20 of the CGST Rules states that the taxpayer seeking cancellation of registration shall have to pay, by way of debiting either the electronic credit or cash ledger, the input tax contained in the stock of inputs, semi-finished goods, finished goods and capital goods or the output tax payable on such goods, whichever is higher. For the purpose of this calculation, the stock of inputs, semi-finished goods, finished goods and capital goods shall be taken as on the day immediately preceding the date with effect from which the cancellation has been ordered by the proper officer i.e. the date of cancellation of registration. However, it is clarified that this requirement to debit the electronic credit and/or cash ledger by suitable amounts should not be a prerequisite for applying for cancellation of registration. This can also be done at the time of submission of final return in **FORM GSTR-10.** In any case, once the taxpayer submits the application for cancellation of his/her registration from a specified date, he/she will not be able to utilize any remaining balances in his/her electronic credit/cash ledgers from the said date except for discharging liabilities under GST Act upto the date of filing of final return in **FORM GSTR-10**. Therefore, the requirement to reverse the balance in the electronic credit ledger is automatically met. In case it is later determined that the output tax liability of the taxpayer, as determined under sub-section (5) of section 29 of the CGST Act, was greater than the amount of input tax credit available, then the difference shall be paid by him/her in cash. It is reiterated that, as stated in sub-section (3) of section 29 of the CGST Act, the cancellation of registration does not, in any way, affect the liability of the taxpayer to pay any dues under the GST law, irrespective of whether such dues have been determined before or after the date of cancellation.

9. In case the final return in **FORM GSTR-10** is not filed within the stipulated date, then notice in **FORM GSTR-3A** has to be issued to the taxpayer. If the taxpayer still fails to file the final return within 15 days of the receipt of notice in **FORM GSTR-3A**, then an assessment order in **FORM GST ASMT-13** under section 62 of the CGST Act read with rule 100 of the CGST Rules shall have to be issued to determine the liability of the taxpayer under sub-section (5) of section 29 on the basis of information available with the proper officer. If the taxpayer files the final return within 30 days of the date of service of the order in **FORM GST ASMT-13**, then the said order shall be deemed to have been withdrawn. However, the liability for payment of interest and late fee shall continue.

10. Rule 68 of the CGST Rules requires issuance of notices to registered persons who fail to furnish returns under section 39 (**FORM GSTR-1, FORM GSTR-3B and FORM GSTR-4**), section 44 (Annual Return – **FORM GSTR-9 / FORM GSTR-9A / FORM GSTR-9C**), section 45 (Final Return – **FORM GSTR-10**) or section 52 (TCS Return – **FORM GSTR-6**). It is clarified that issuance of notice would not be required for registered persons who have not made any taxable supplies during the intervening period (i.e. from the date of registration to the date of application for cancellation of registration) and has furnished an undertaking to this effect.

11. It is pertinent to mention here that section 29 of the CGST Act has been amended by the CGST (Amendment) Act, 2018 to provide for *"Suspension"* of registration. The intent of the said amendment is to ensure that a taxpayer is freed from the routine compliances, including filing returns, under GST Act during the pendency of the proceedings related to cancellation. Although the provisions of CGST (Amendment) Act, 2018 have not yet been brought into force, it will be prudent for the field formations not to issue notices for non-filing of return for taxpayers who have already filed an application for cancellation of registration under section 29 of the CGST Act. However, the requirement of filing a final return, as under section 45 of the CGST Act, remains unchanged.

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12**.** It may be noted that the information in table in **FORM GST REG-19** shall be taken from the liability ledger and the difference between the amounts in Table 10 and Table 11 of **FORM GST REG-16**.

13. It is requested that suitable trade notices may be issued to publicize the contents of this circular.

14. Difficulty, if any, in implementation of the above instructions may please be brought to the notice of the Board. Hindi version would follow.

(Upender Gupta)
Commissioner (GST)