

EMP501 Reconciliation Checklist

Interim and Annual Submissions

South Africa | 2026

What is EMP501?

EMP501 is the reconciliation of your EMP201 payments against year-to-date payroll totals.

Two submission periods each year:

- **Interim:** 1 March to 31 August (due 31 October)
 - **Annual:** 1 March to 28/29 February (due 31 May)
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Before You Submit: Complete This Checklist

1. Confirm your reconciliation period

- Interim period: 1 March to 31 August
- Annual period: 1 March to 28/29 February

2. Update employee master data

- Full names (first name and surname)
- ID numbers or passport numbers
- Tax reference numbers (TRNs) for all employees
- Physical residential addresses
- Banking details (where required)

Critical: From February 2026, TRNs are mandatory. Submissions without valid TRNs will be rejected.

3. Verify year-to-date totals in your payroll system

- Total remuneration
- Taxable benefits
- Fringe benefits
- All deductions

4. Match monthly EMP201s to payroll reports

- All EMP201 totals match payroll reports

- All payments are recorded
- No gaps or mismatches in the period

5. Generate and validate IRP5/IT3(a) certificates

- Create certificate for each employee
- Verify all amounts and tax calculations
- Check all source codes are correct

6. Review tax treatment of allowances

- Travel allowances
- Medical scheme contributions
- Retirement fund contributions
- Reimbursive expenses

7. Resolve anomalies before submission

- Fix negative totals
- Add missing tax numbers
- Remove duplicate employee records
- Correct mismatched amounts

8. Prepare and validate the EMP501

- Generate declaration in e@syFile or eFiling
- Verify that EMP201s, payments and certificates reconcile
- Review totals for PAYE, SDL and UIF

9. Submit on time

- Submit before the deadline
- Keep proof of submission
- Save reconciliation reports for your audit trail

10. After filing

- Check submission status on SARS platform
- Distribute IRP5/IT3(a) certificates to employees (annual period only)
- Keep all records for five years

Common Issues to Watch For

Missing TRNs

Register employees immediately using ITREG on eFiling or e@syFile.

EMP201 corrections during reconciliation

Corrections made on EMP501 attract penalties and interest. Fix errors on EMP201 before reconciliation.

Unused ETI credits

Submit interim and annual EMP501s on time or forfeit unused Employment Tax Incentive amounts.

Late submissions

EMP501 penalties start at 1% of annual PAYE liability and increase by 1% per month (max 10%).

How Payroll Needs helps

We manage your entire payroll process:

- Monthly EMP201 preparation and submission
- Interim and annual EMP501 reconciliations
- IRP5/IT3(a) certificate generation
- Deadline reminders and compliance support

Based in Pretoria, serving Johannesburg and surrounds.

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