

Terms and Conditions

Mildrid Esua, CPA, PLLC 's Terms and Conditions Addendum

Overview

This addendum to the engagement letter describes our standard terms and conditions ("Terms and Conditions") related to our provision of services to you. This addendum and the accompanying engagement letter comprise your agreement with us ("Agreement"). If there is any inconsistency between the engagement letter and this *Terms and Conditions Addendum*, the engagement letter will prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

For the purposes of this *Terms and Conditions Addendum*, any reference to "firm," "we," "us," or "our" is a reference to Mildrid Esua, CPA, PLLC, and any reference to "you," or "your" is a reference to the party or parties that have engaged us to provide services. References to "Agreement" mean the engagement letter or other written document describing the scope of services, any other attachments incorporated therein, and this *Terms and Conditions Addendum*.

Services

Services –We will perform the services with reasonable skill and care. You confirm that the scope is sufficient for your purpose. The services

(including deliverables) are provided solely for **You** for the purpose set out in the agreement or the relevant deliverable.

Billing and Payment Terms

Payment for services

You agree to pay us for our services. Any estimate we may give you is not binding.

Basis of fees

Our fees may reflect not only time spent, but also such factors as complexity, urgency, inherent risks, use of techniques, knowhow and research together with the level of skills and expertise required of the personnel needed to perform and review the services. Our fees may

include any time spent travelling for the purpose

of the services that cannot be used productively

for other purposes.

Expenses

You will pay any relevant expenses that we incur in connection with the services.

Our firm's practice requires payment of the retainer upon execution of this Agreement. You agree that the retainer will be earned as our professional time to complete the engagement is incurred. The

retainer will be applied to the final billing and any unused balance will be refunded at the end of the engagement.

Invoices and payment

Unless otherwise provided in the agreement we may invoice you on a monthly basis and all invoices are payable **within 14 calendar days** of the date of the invoice.

Payment is due prior

to electronic submission, or mailing, of your tax return(s). If payment is not received by the due date, you will be assessed interest charges of 18% per month on the unpaid balance.

-We reserve the right to suspend or terminate our work for non-payment of fees. If our work is suspended or terminated, you agree that we will not be responsible for your failure to meet governmental and other deadlines, for any penalties or interest that may be assessed against you resulting from your failure to meet such deadlines, and for any other damages (including but not limited to consequential, indirect, lost profits, or punitive damages) incurred as a result of the suspension or termination of our services.

Electronic Data Communication and Storage

In the interest of facilitating our services to you, we may send data over the Internet, or store electronic data via computer software applications hosted remotely on the Internet or utilize cloud-based storage. Your confidential electronic data may be transmitted or stored using these methods. We may use third party service providers to store or transmit this data, such as providers of tax return preparation software. In using these data communication and storage methods, our firm employs measures designed to maintain data security. We use reasonable efforts to keep such communications and electronic data secure in accordance with our obligations under applicable laws, regulations, and professional standards. We require our third-party vendors to do the same.

You recognize and accept that we have no control over the unauthorized interception or breach of any communications or electronic data once it has been transmitted or if it has been subject to unauthorized access while stored, notwithstanding all reasonable security measures employed by us or our third-party vendors. You consent to our use of these electronic devices and applications and submission of confidential client information to third party service providers during this engagement.

Client Portals

To enhance our services to you, we will utilize our website portal or NetClient CS, a collaborative, virtual workspace in a protected, online environment. NetClient CS permits real-time collaboration across geographic boundaries and time zones and allows Mildrid Esua, CPA, PLLC and you to share data, engagement information, knowledge, and deliverables in a protected environment. In order to use NetClient CS, you will be required to execute a client portal agreement and agree to be bound by the terms, conditions and limitations of such agreement.

You agree that we have no responsibility for the activities of NetClient CS and agree to indemnify and hold us harmless with respect to any and all claims arising from or related to the operation of NetClient

CS. While NetClient CS backs up your files to a third-party server, we recommend that you also maintain your own backup files of these records.

If you decide to transmit your confidential information to us in a manner other than a secure portal, you accept responsibility for any and all unauthorized access to your confidential information. If you request that we transmit confidential information to you in a manner other than a secure portal, you agree that we are not responsible for (a) any loss or damage of any nature, whether direct or indirect, that may arise as a result of our sending confidential information in a manner other than a secure portal, and (b) any damages arising as a result of any virus being passed on or with, or arising from any alteration of, any email message

Third Party Service Providers or Subcontractors

In the interest of enhancing our availability to meet your professional service needs while maintaining service quality and timeliness, we may use a third-party service provider to assist us in the provision of services to you, which may include receipt of your confidential information. This provider has established procedures and controls designed to protect client confidentiality and maintain data security. As the paid provider of professional services, our firm remains responsible for exercising reasonable care in providing such services, and our work product will be subjected to our firm's customary quality control procedures.

By accepting the terms and conditions of our engagement, you are providing your consent and authorization to disclose your confidential information to a third-party service provider, if such disclosure is necessary to deliver professional service or provide support services to our firm.

Independent Contractor

When providing services to your company, we will be functioning as an independent contractor and in no event will we or any of our employees be an officer of you, nor will our relationship be that of joint venturers, partners, employer and employee, principal and agent, or any similar relationship giving rise to a fiduciary duty to you.

Records Management

Record Retention and Ownership

We will return all of your original records and documents provided to us at the conclusion of the engagement. Your records are the primary records for your operations and comprise the backup and support for your work product. Our copies of your records and documents are not a substitute for your own records and do not mitigate your record retention obligations under any applicable laws or regulations.

Workpapers and other documents created by us are our property and will remain in our control. Copies are not to be distributed without your written request and our prior written consent. Our workpapers will be maintained by us in accordance with our firm's record retention policy and any applicable legal and regulatory requirements. A copy of our record retention policy is available upon request.

Our firm destroys workpaper files after a period of 5 years. Catastrophic events or physical deterioration may result in damage to or destruction of our firm's records, causing the records to be unavailable before the expiration of the retention period as stated in our record retention policy.

Working Paper Access Requests by Regulators and Others

State, federal and foreign regulators may request access to or copies of certain workpapers pursuant to applicable legal or regulatory requirements. Requests also may arise with respect to peer review, an ethics investigation, or the sale of our accounting practice. If requested, access to such workpapers will be provided under the supervision of firm personnel. Regulators may request copies of selected workpapers to distribute the copies or information contained therein to others, including other governmental agencies.

If we receive a request for copies of selected workpapers, provided that we are not prohibited from doing so by applicable laws or regulations, we agree to inform you of such request as soon as practicable. You may, within the time permitted for our firm to respond to any request, initiate such legal action as you deem appropriate, at your sole expense, to attempt to limit the disclosure of information. If you take no action within the time permitted for us to respond, or if your action does not result in a judicial order protecting us from supplying requested information, we may construe your inaction or failure as consent to comply with the request.

If we are not a party to the proceeding in which the information is sought, you agree to reimburse us for our professional time and expenses, as well as the fees and expenses of our legal counsel, incurred in responding to such requests. This paragraph will survive termination of this Agreement.

Summons or Subpoenas

All information you provide to us in connection with this engagement will be maintained by us on a strictly confidential basis.

If we receive a summons or subpoena which our legal counsel determines requires us to produce documents from this engagement or testify about this engagement, provided that we are not prohibited from doing so by applicable laws or regulations, we agree to inform you of such summons or subpoena as soon as practicable. You may, within the time permitted for our firm to respond to any request, initiate such legal action as you deem appropriate, at your sole expense, to attempt to limit discovery. If you take no action within the time permitted for us to respond, or if your action does not result in a judicial order protecting us from supplying requested information, we may construe your inaction or failure as consent to comply with the request.

If we are not a party to the proceeding in which the information is sought, you agree to reimburse us for our professional time and expenses, as well as the fees and expenses of our legal counsel, incurred in responding to such requests. This paragraph will survive termination of this Agreement.

Newsletters and Similar Communications

We may send newsletters, emails, explanations of technical developments or similar communications to you. These communications are of a general nature and should not be construed as professional advice.

We may not send all such communications to you. These communications do not continue a client

relationship with you, nor do they constitute advice or an undertaking on our part to monitor issues for you.

Disclaimer of Legal and Investment Advice

Our services under this Agreement do not constitute legal or investment advice unless specifically agreed to in the *Engagement Objective and Scope* section of this Agreement. We recommend that you retain legal counsel and investment advisors to provide such advice.

Referrals

In the course of providing services to you, you may request referrals to attorneys, brokers, investment advisors or other professionals. We may identify a professional or professionals for your consideration. However, you are responsible for evaluating, selecting, and retaining any professional and determining if the professional can meet your needs. You agree that we have no responsibility for and will not oversee the activities of any professional to whom we refer you.

Brokerage or Investment Advisory Statements

If you provide our firm with copies of brokerage (or investment advisory) statements and/or read-only access to your accounts, we will use the information solely for the purpose described in the *Engagement Objective and Scope* section of the engagement letter. We will rely on the accuracy of the information provided in the statements and will not undertake any action to verify this information. We will not monitor transactions, investment activity, provide investment advice, or supervise the actions of the entity or individuals entering into transactions or investment activities on your behalf. We recommend that you receive and carefully review all statements upon receipt and direct any questions regarding account activity to your banker, broker or investment advisor.

Other Income, Losses and Expenses

If you realized income, loss or expense from a business or supplemental income or loss, the reporting requirements of federal and state income tax authorities apply to such income, loss or expense. You are responsible for complying with all applicable laws and regulations pertaining to such operations, including the classification of workers as employees or independent contractors and related payroll tax and withholding requirements.

Accountant – Client Privilege

Internal Revenue Code §7525, *Confidentiality Privileges Related to Taxpayer Communication*, provides a limited confidentiality privilege applying to tax advice embodied in taxpayer communications with federally authorized tax practitioners in certain limited situations.

This privilege is limited in several important respects. For example, this privilege does not apply to your records, which you are required to retain in support of your tax return. In addition, the privilege does not apply to state tax issues, state tax proceedings, private civil litigation proceedings, or criminal proceedings.

While we will cooperate with you with respect to the privilege, asserting the privilege is your responsibility. Inadvertent disclosure of otherwise privileged information may result in a waiver of the

privilege. Please contact us immediately if you have any questions or need further information about this CPA-client privilege.

Limitations on Oral and Email Communications

We may discuss with you our views regarding the treatment of certain items or decisions you may encounter. We may also provide you with information in an email. Any advice or information delivered orally or in an email (rather than through a memorandum delivered as an email attachment) will be based upon limited research and a limited discussion and analysis of the underlying facts. Additional research or a more complete review of the facts may affect our analysis and conclusions.

Due to these limitations and the related risks, it may or may not be appropriate to proceed with any decision solely on the basis of any oral or email communication. You accept all responsibility, except to the extent caused by our gross negligence or willful misconduct, for any loss, cost or expense resulting from your decision **(i)** not to have us perform the research and analysis necessary to reach a more definitive conclusion and **(ii)** to instead rely on an oral or email communication. The limitation in this paragraph will not apply to an item of written advice that is a deliverable of a separate engagement. If you wish to engage us to provide formal advice on a matter on which we have communicated orally or by email, we will confirm this service in a separate engagement letter.

Oral advice and draft deliverables

You may rely only on our final written deliverables and not on oral advice or draft deliverables. If you wish to rely on something, we have said to you, please let us know so that we may prepare a written deliverable on which you can rely.

Monitoring

We shall not update our advice for any changes in law or regulations, or their interpretation, that occur after the date of the services provided.

Management Responsibilities

Information – In order for us to advise you properly you will make sure that **(i)** any information given to us by you, or anyone else working with or for you, is **(a)** given promptly, **(b)** accurate and **(c)** complete; and **(ii)** any assumptions are appropriate. We will not verify any information given to us relating to the services.

Your obligations

Our performance depends on you performing your obligations under the contract. We are not liable for any loss arising from you not fulfilling your obligations.

While Mildrid Esua, CPA, PLLC can provide assistance and recommendations, you are responsible for management decisions and functions, and for designating an individual with suitable skill, knowledge and experience to oversee any services that Mildrid Esua, CPA, PLLC provides. You are responsible for evaluating the adequacy and results of the services performed and accepting responsibility for such services. You are ultimately responsible for establishing and maintaining internal controls, including monitoring ongoing activities.

Conflicts of Interest

If we, in our sole discretion, believe a conflict has arisen affecting our ability to deliver services to you in accordance with either the ethical standards of our firm or the ethical standards of our profession, we may be required to suspend or terminate our services without issuing our work product. You agree that we will not be responsible for your failure to meet governmental and other deadlines, for any penalties or interest that may be assessed against you resulting from your failure to meet such deadlines, and for any other damages (including but not limited to consequential, indirect, lost profits, or punitive damages) incurred as a result of the suspension or termination of our services.

Termination

Immediate notice – Either we or you may end the contract immediately by giving written notice to the other if **(i)** the other materially breaches it

and does not remedy the breach within five business days upon receipt of a notice, **(ii)** the other is or appears likely to be unable to pay its debts or becomes insolvent or **(iii)** the performance of it (including the application of

any fee arrangements) may breach a legal or regulatory requirement.

30 days' notice – Either we or you may end the contract on 30 calendar days' written notice.

Fees payable on termination

You agree to pay us for all services we perform up to the date of termination. Where there is a fixed fee for

services, you agree to pay us for the services that we have performed on the basis of the time spent at our then current hourly rates, up to the

amount of the fixed fee. Any contingent element of the fees will remain payable in accordance with the agreement. If a contingent fee cannot be

paid for regulatory reasons, you agree to pay all

outstanding fees on the basis of time spent, unless alternative arrangements have been agreed.

Alternative Dispute Resolution

If a dispute arises out of or relates to the Agreement including the scope of services contained herein, or the breach thereof, and if the dispute cannot be settled through negotiation, the parties agree first to try to settle the dispute by mediation administered by the American Arbitration Association (“AAA”) under the *AAA Professional Accounting and Related Services Dispute Resolution Rules* before resorting to arbitration, litigation, or some other dispute resolution procedure. The mediator will be selected by the mutual agreement of the parties. If the parties cannot agree on a mediator, a mediator shall be designated by the AAA. The mediation will be conducted in the State of North Carolina.

The mediation will be treated as a settlement discussion and, therefore, all conversations during the mediation will be confidential. The mediator may not testify for either party in any later proceeding related to the dispute. No recording or transcript shall be made of the mediation proceedings. The costs

of any mediation proceedings shall be shared equally by all parties. Any costs for legal representation shall be borne by the hiring party.

Designation of Venue and Jurisdiction

In the event of a dispute, you and we agree that the courts of the state of the State of North Carolina shall have jurisdiction, and we agree to submit all disputes to the Guilford County Superior Court, which is the proper and most convenient venue for resolution. We also agree that the law of the state of the State of Maine shall govern all such disputes.

Insurance

Mildrid Esua, CPA, PLLC shall, during the term of the engagement and for 1 year after termination of same by either you or us, maintain in full force and effect, accountant's professional liability insurance coverage from an insurance carrier or carriers licensed to conduct business in the state of the State of North Carolina. As of the policy effective date, such insurance carrier(s) shall be rated A- (Excellent), by A.M. Best with a Financial Size Category of Class VII or greater. Premiums for said insurance policy shall be paid by Mildrid Esua, CPA, PLLC.

Upon your written request, Mildrid Esua, CPA, PLLC shall furnish certificates of insurance for the required professional liability insurance coverage. Such certificate of insurance shall indicate the minimum limits of liability per claim and in the aggregate as required by you.

Proprietary Information

You acknowledge that proprietary information, documents, materials, management techniques and other intellectual property are a material source of the services we perform and were developed prior to our association with you. Any new forms, software, documents or intellectual property we develop during this engagement for your use shall belong to us, and you shall have the limited right to use them solely within your business. All reports, templates, manuals, forms, checklists, questionnaires, letters, agreements and other documents which we make available to you are confidential and proprietary to us. Neither you, nor any of your agents, will copy, electronically store, reproduce or make available to anyone other than your personnel, any such documents. This provision will apply to all materials whether in digital, "hard copy" format or other medium.

Performing services for others

You agree that we may perform services for your competitors or other parties whose interests may conflict with yours, as long as we do not disclose your confidential information and we comply with our ethical obligations and no conflict of interest arises.

Statute of Limitations

You agree that any claim arising out of this Agreement shall be commenced within one (1) year of the delivery of the work product to you, regardless of any longer period of time for commencing such claim as may be set by law. A claim is understood to be a demand for money or services, the service of a suit, or the institution of arbitration proceedings against Mildrid Esua, CPA, PLLC.

Termination and Withdrawal

We reserve the right to withdraw from the engagement without completing services for any reason, including, but not limited to, your failure to comply with the terms of this Agreement or as we determine professional standards require.

If this Agreement is terminated before services are completed, you agree to compensate us for the services performed and expenses incurred through the effective date of termination.

Assignment

All parties acknowledge and agree that the terms and conditions of this Agreement shall be binding upon and inure to the parties' successors and assigns, subject to applicable laws and regulations.

Severability

If any portion of this Agreement is deemed invalid or unenforceable, said finding shall not operate to invalidate the remainder of the terms set forth in this Agreement.

Entire Agreement

The engagement letter, including this *Terms and Conditions Addendum* and any other attachments, encompasses the entire agreement of the parties and supersedes all previous understandings and agreements between the parties, whether oral or written. Any modification to the terms of this Agreement must be made in writing and signed by both parties.