

TRANSGENDERS WITH AADHAAR CAN SUBMIT E-RETURNS

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NEW DELHI: The income tax e-filing website has been modified to accept returns from those with transgender Aadhaar cards.

With two days to go for filing returns for the assessment year 2017-18, transgender persons can now file their income tax returns on the e-filing website of the Department of Income Tax by submitting their Aadhaar numbers. Till now, the website did not accept the Aadhaar numbers of many transgender persons.


According to a letter issued by the principal commissioner of Income Tax (Puducherry) Jahanzeb Akhtar, "Changes for incorporation of the third gender identity have been made in the online income-tax return filing facility in the e-filing portal. Necessary changes in the CPC-ITR have also been effected." (CPC is short for central processing centre and ITR stands for income tax returns.)

The letter, dated March 15, was received by Sameera Jahagirdar, a transwoman based in Puducherry. Jahagirdar had written to Akhtar in February citing difficulty in linking her PAN with her 12-digit biometric Aadhaar number before the March 31 deadline to link the two, due to a mismatch in gender on both cards.

Many transgender persons have an Aadhaar card with 'transgender' as the gender reflected on the card. However, PAN only accepts 'male' and 'female' during the application procedure. As a result, many in the transgender community have a PAN card with the gender assigned to them at birth, and a different name than the one on their Aadhaar cards.

The mismatch carries many implications, foremost of which was the inability to file income tax returns.

The Finance Act 2017 introduced a provision, Section 139AA to the Income Tax Act (1961), which made the linking of PAN with Aadhaar mandatory.

 Changes for incorporation of the third gender identity have been made in the online IT return filing facility in the e-filing portal. Necessary changes in the CPC-ITR have also been effected

LETTER BY JAHANZEB AKHTAR,
PRINCIPAL COMMISSIONER OF
INCOME TAX (PUDUCHERRY)