



# How Your Chief Accountant is Shaping Your Vietnam Operations



## Introduction

The role of a Chief Accountant in Vietnam is pivotal and distinct within the organizational framework. While the fundamentals of this position echo its global counterparts, the Vietnamese business environment imbues it with unique characteristics. Beyond the mere oversight of financial records, a Chief Accountant serves as an indispensable component of a company's core operations, wielding responsibility for the efficient and effective management of financial affairs.

For foreign firms operating in Vietnam, it's essential to understand and ensure compliance with the chief accountant component of Vietnam's Law on Accounting. This ensures a smooth and legally compliant financial management process in the country.

Understanding the significance of the chief accountant role is crucial for foreign firms operating in Vietnam. The contents of this report will provide the general view about Chief Accountant in Vietnam detail as below:

- 1 What is a Chief Accountant?**
- 2 Legal requirements and obligations**
- 3 The Role of the Chief Accountant**
- 4 Benefits of having a Nominee Chief Accountant**
- 5 Chief Accountant Outsourcing In Vietnam**
- 6 Chief Accountant – Our professional services.**

As per Clause 1, Article 53 of the Law on Accounting 2015, the Chief Accountant assumes the role of overseeing the accounting apparatus within a unit, serving as its head, and taking charge of the execution of all accounting functions within that domain.

The Chief Accountant operates under the guidance of the legal representative of the accounting unit, holding the responsibility of upholding the credibility of a company or corporation's accounts and aligning them with the standards set by management. In the fulfillment of this role, the Chief Accountant meticulously verifies the tasks executed by the accounting teams, ensuring accuracy and adherence to established standards.



All companies must appoint a Chief Accountant, unless they are extra-small where they can appoint an Acting Chief Accountant. Companies can also appoint an Acting Chief Accountant for up to 12 months prior to the appointment of a Chief Accountant.

Companies can also acquire the services of a Chief Accountant through an Accounting Services Firm which is registered to provide accounting services, should they choose not to employ a Chief Accountant directly.

Following Vietnam's Law on Accounting 2015, the role of a Chief Accountant carries distinct qualifications, setting it apart from standard accounting positions. These requirements apply both to individuals seeking the role and those being considered for promotion to Chief Accountant:

- Possess a Bachelor of Accountancy degree, also referred to as a Bachelor of Accounting.
- Accumulate a minimum of 2 years of practical experience either as an accountant or in performing accounting duties.
- Undergo specialized training to obtain a Certificate of Chief Accountant, as detailed in [Circular 199/2011/TT-BTC](#). This certification is a prerequisite for assuming the position of Chief Accountant.
- Exhibit an adequate level of knowledge and skills relevant to the Chief Accountant role, coupled with a commitment to ethical work practices.
- Fulfill the standards established by the government for their specific type of accounting unit, ensuring alignment with regulatory expectations.

### 3. THE ROLE OF THE CHIEF ACCOUNTANT



A chief accountant has the responsibility to:

- Comply with regulations of law on accounting and finance of accounting units;
- Organize the operation of the accounting apparatus in accordance with this Law;
- Make financial statements in accordance with accounting regimes and accounting standards.

The chief accountant has the right to perform accounting works independently.

Chief accountants of regulatory agencies, organizations and public service agencies using state budget, and enterprises whose over 50% charter capital is held by the State, apart from the rights specified in Clause 2 of this Article, also have the right to:

- Offer opinions in writing about employment, reassignment, pay raise, commendation, and disciplinary actions for accountants, warehouse-keepers, and treasurers;
- Request relevant departments of the accounting unit to provide adequate documents related to the chief accountant's accounting works and financial supervision works in a timely manner;
- Preserve his/her opinions in writing if they are at odds with that of the decision maker;
- Submit written reports to the legal representative of the accounting unit on discovered violations against regulations of law on finance and accounting in the unit. If the decision has to be complied with, the report shall be sent to the person superior to the decision maker or a competent authority. In this case the chief accountant is not responsible for the implementation of such decision.

## 4. BENEFITS OF HAVING A NOMINEE CHIEF ACCOUNTANT



The appointment of a chief accountant holds various benefits for businesses, particularly ensuring compliance with legal regulations. The chief accountant assumes a crucial role, in overseeing, supervising, and guaranteeing the quality of work within the company's accounting department.

For small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), hiring a full-time chief accountant can impose a substantial financial burden on the business. Opting for the service of a nominee chief accountant offers a cost-effective solution, minimizing expenses while optimizing the utilization of human resources within the company. This approach proves especially valuable when addressing staff shortages in key roles, such as tax accountants, providing businesses with a seasoned professional to fill vacancies and maintain the seamless functioning of the accounting department.

Engaging a chief accountant through a nominee service reduces costs and provides businesses with an experienced individual responsible for overseeing work and possessing full legal status.



The swiftest and most effective approach to expanding into a new market, ensuring tax compliance with local laws, is through the utilization of business process outsourcing providers. These providers offer corporate secretarial services, a valuable resource prevalent in emerging markets, with years of expertise in assisting foreign companies in establishing their foothold. Vietnam, in particular, follows this trend, where the intricacies of constantly evolving local tax regulations necessitate the guidance of a proficient accountant to avoid potential disadvantages.

Regulations governing accounting firms providing the aforementioned services to enterprises tend to be more comprehensive compared to those for in-house accountants. To engage in these services, a service provider must hold a Certificate of Eligibility to provide accounting services, meeting all conditions stipulated in Vietnam's Law on Accounting. This includes obtaining a Certificate of Chief Accountant training.

The Certificate of Eligibility is conferred upon accounting firms that can demonstrate:

- Possession of an Investment Registration Certificate (IRC), Enterprise Registration Certificate (ERC), or equivalent registration documents.
- Employment of at least two accounting professionals, either as employees or capital contributors.
- The presence of a director, general director, or legal representative who is also an accounting professional.



## 6. CHIEF ACCOUNTANT OUR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES



With this service, we will play the role of the client's Chief Accountant, we will perform an independent review of the client's accounting reports, supporting documents, and tax filings, and finally sign all the related documents under the role of Chief Accountant as required by the accounting laws.

Two case of Chief Accountant service at our Company :

In the case that we provide both **accounting review service** and **chief accountant service** to the client,

⇒ The Chief-Accountant service is **limited to signing all documents** under the role of Chief Accountant only and the service fee will be reduced accordingly

In the case that the client is **not using our accounting review service package**,

⇒ The Chief-accountant service's scope of work, in this case, **will be fully implemented**, rather than limited to signing documents as required by the accounting laws only.

At ICL, we offer a full range of tailor-made Accounting services that meeting the exact requirements of each individual client.

### Meet our expert



**Van Hau (Harry), CPA**  
Managing Partner



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