

been incurred to the extent of the decrease. Finally, A does not incur customary expenses of \$150 for food obtained for home preparation, \$75 for utilities expenses, and \$10 for laundry cleansers. The limitation upon the excludable amount of an insurance recovery for excess living expenses is \$150, computed as follows:

LIVING EXPENSES			
	Actual re- sulting from cas- ualty	Normal not incurred	Increase (decrease)
Housing	\$200.00	\$200.00
Utilities	\$75.00	(75.00)
Meals	180.00	150.00	30.00
Transportation	20.00	(20.00)
Laundry	25.00	10.00	150.00
Total	405.00	255.00	15.00

Example (2). Assume the same facts as in example (1) except that the damaged residence is not owned by A but is rented to him for \$100 per month and that the risk of loss is upon the lessor. Since A would not have incurred the normal rental of \$100 for March, the excludable amount is limited to \$50 (\$150 as in previous example less \$100 normal rent not incurred).

(c) *Principal residence.* Whether or not property is used by the insured taxpayer and members of his household as their principal residence depends upon all the facts and circumstances in each case. For purposes of this section, a principal residence may be a dwelling or an apartment leased to the insured as well as a dwelling or apartment owned by the insured.

[T.D. 7118, 36 FR 10729, June 2, 1971, as amended by T.D. 7728, 45 FR 72650, Nov. 3, 1980]

§ 1.125-2T Question and answer relating to the benefits that may be offered under a cafeteria plan (temporary).

Q-1: What benefits may be offered to participants under a cafeteria plan?

A-1: (a) Generally, for cafeteria plan years beginning on or after January 1, 1985, a cafeteria plan is a written plan under which participants may choose among two or more benefits consisting of cash and certain other permissible benefits. In general, benefits that are excludable from the gross income of an employee under a specific section of the Internal Revenue Code may be offered under a cafeteria plan. However,

scholarships and fellowships under section 117, vanpooling under section 124, educational assistance under section 127 and certain fringe benefits under section 132 may not be offered under a cafeteria plan. In addition, meals and lodging under section 119, because they are furnished for the convenience of the employer and thus are not elective in lieu of other benefits or compensation provided by the employer, may not be offered under a cafeteria plan. Thus, a cafeteria plan may offer coverage under a group-term life insurance plan of up to \$50,000 (section 79), coverage under an accident or health plan (sections 105 and 106), coverage under a qualified group legal services plan (section 120), coverage under a dependent care assistance program (section 129), and participation in a qualified cash or deferred arrangement that is part of a profit-sharing or stock bonus plan (section 401(k)). In addition, a cafeteria plan may offer group-term life insurance coverage which is includable in gross income only because it is in excess of \$50,000 or is on the lives of the participant's spouse and/or children. In addition, a cafeteria plan may offer participants the opportunity to purchase, with after-tax employee contributions, coverage under a group-term life insurance plan (section 79), coverage under an accident or health plan (section 105(e)), coverage under a qualified group legal services plan (section 120), or coverage under a dependent care assistance program (section 129). Finally, a cafeteria plan may offer paid vacation days if the plan precludes any participant from using, or receiving cash for, in a subsequent plan year, any of such paid vacation days remaining unused as of the end of the plan year. For purposes of the preceding sentence, elective vacation days provided under a cafeteria plan are not considered to be used until all nonelective paid vacation days have been used.

(b) Note that benefits that may be offered under a cafeteria plan may or may not be taxable depending upon whether such benefits qualify for an exclusion from gross income. However, a cafeteria plan may not offer a benefit that is taxable because such benefit fails to satisfy any applicable eligibility, coverage, or nondiscrimination

requirement. Similarly, a plan may not offer a benefit for purchase with after-tax employee contributions if such benefit would fail to satisfy any eligibility, coverage, or nondiscrimination requirement that would apply if such benefit were designed to be provided on a nontaxable basis with employer contributions. Also, note that section 125(d)(2) provides that a cafeteria plan may not offer a benefit that defers the receipt of compensation (other than the opportunity to make elective contributions under a qualified cash or deferred arrangement) and may not operate in a manner that enables participants to defer the receipt of compensation.

[T.D. 8073, 51 FR 4318, Feb. 4, 1986]

§ 1.125-3 Effect of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) on the operation of cafeteria plans.

The following questions and answers provide guidance on the effect of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), 29 U.S.C. 2601 *et seq.*, on the operation of cafeteria plans:

Q-1: May an employee revoke coverage or cease payment of his or her share of group health plan premiums when taking unpaid FMLA, 29 U.S.C. 2601 *et seq.*, leave?

A-1: Yes. An employer must either allow an employee on unpaid FMLA leave to revoke coverage, or continue coverage but allow the employee to discontinue payment of his or her share of the premium for group health plan coverage (including a health flexible spending arrangement (FSA)) under a cafeteria plan for the period of the FMLA leave. See 29 CFR 825.209(e). FMLA does not require that an employer allow an employee to revoke coverage if the employer pays the employee's share of premiums. As discussed in Q&A-3, if the employer continues coverage during an FMLA leave, the employer may recover the employee's share of the premiums when the employee returns to work. FMLA also provides the employee a right to be reinstated in the group health plan coverage (including a health FSA) provided under a cafeteria plan upon returning from FMLA leave if the employee's group health plan coverage terminated while on FMLA leave (ei-

ther by revocation or due to non-payment of premiums). Such an employee is entitled, to the extent required under FMLA, to be reinstated on the same terms as prior to taking FMLA leave (including family or dependent coverage), subject to any changes in benefit levels that may have taken place during the period of FMLA leave as provided in 29 CFR 825.215(d)(1). See 29 CFR 825.209(e) and 825.215(d). In addition, such an employee has the right to revoke or change elections under § 1.125-4 (e.g., because of changes in status or cost or coverage changes as provided under § 1.125-4) under the same terms and conditions as are available to employees participating in the cafeteria plan who are working and not on FMLA leave.

Q-2: Who is responsible for making premium payments under a cafeteria plan when an employee on FMLA leave continues group health plan coverage?

A-2: FMLA provides that an employee is entitled to continue group health plan coverage during FMLA leave whether or not that coverage is provided under a health FSA or other component of a cafeteria plan. See 29 CFR 825.209(b). FMLA permits an employer to require an employee who chooses to continue group health plan coverage while on FMLA leave to be responsible for the share of group health premiums that would be allocable to the employee if the employee were working, and, for this purpose, treats amounts paid pursuant to a pre-tax salary reduction agreement as amounts allocable to the employee. However, FMLA requires the employer to continue to contribute the share of the cost of the employee's coverage that the employer was paying before the employee commenced FMLA leave. See 29 CFR 825.100(b) and 825.210(a).

Q-3: What payment options are required or permitted to be offered under a cafeteria plan to an employee who continues group health plan coverage while on unpaid FMLA leave, and what is the tax treatment of these payments?

A-3: (a) *In general.* Subject to the limitations described in paragraph (b) of this Q&A-3, a cafeteria plan may offer one or more of the following payment options, or a combination of