

commence, whichever is earlier and determined in accordance with regulations of PBGC) without regard to any other limitations in section 4022 of ERISA.

(iv) A plan provision satisfying this paragraph (c)(7) may be adopted by amendment or by incorporation at the time of establishment. Any allocation of assets attributable to employer contributions to an employee which exceeds the dollar limitation in this paragraph (c)(7) may be reallocated to prevent prohibited discrimination.

(v) The early termination rules in the preceding subparagraphs (1) through (6) apply to a qualified Title IV plan except where such rules are determined by the Commissioner to be inconsistent with the rules of this paragraph (c)(7), §1.411(d)-2, and section 4044(b)(4) of ERISA. The early termination rules of this paragraph (c)(7) contain some of the rules under section 401(a)(4) and (a)(7), as in effect on September 2, 1974, and section 411(d) (2) and (3). Section 1.411(d)-2 also contains certain discrimination and vesting rules which are applicable to plan terminations.

(vi) Paragraph (c)(7) of this section applies to plan terminations occurring on or after March 12, 1984. For distributions not on account of plan terminations, paragraph (c)(7) applies to distributions in plan years beginning after December 31, 1983. However, a plan may elect to apply that paragraph to distributions not on account of plan termination on or after January 10, 1984.

(d)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (d)(2) of this section, the provisions of this section do not apply to plan years beginning on or after January 1, 1994. For rules applicable to plan years beginning on or after January 1, 1994, see §§ 1.401(a)(4)-1 through 1.401(a)(4)-13.

(2) In the case of plans maintained by organizations exempt from income taxation under section 501(a), including plans subject to section 403(b)(12)(A)(i) (nonelective plans), the provisions of this section do not apply to plan years beginning on or after January 1, 1996. For rules applicable to plan years be-

ginning on or after January 1, 1996, see §§ 1.401(a)(4)-1 through 1.401(a)(4)-13.

(Secs. 411 (d)(2) and (3) and 7805 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (68A Stat. 917, 88 Stat. 912; 26 U.S.C. 411(d)(2) and (3) and 7805))

[T.D. 6500, 25 FR 11674, Nov. 26, 1960, as amended by T.D. 6675, 28 FR 10119, Sept. 17, 1963; T.D. 7934, 49 FR 1183, Jan. 10, 1984; 49 FR 2104, Jan. 18, 1984; T.D. 8360, 56 FR 47536, Sept. 19, 1991; T.D. 8485, 58 FR 46778, Sept. 3, 1993]

**§ 1.401-5 Period for which requirements of section 401(a) (3), (4), (5), and (6) are applicable with respect to plans put into effect before September 2, 1974.**

A pension, profit-sharing, stock bonus, or annuity plan shall be considered as satisfying the requirements of section 401(a) (3), (4), (5), and (6) for the period beginning with the date on which it was put into effect and ending with the 15th day of the third month following the close of the taxable year of the employer in which the plan was put into effect, if all the provisions of the plan which are necessary to satisfy such requirements are in effect by the end of such period and have been made effective for all purposes with respect to the whole of such period. Thus, if an employer in 1954 adopts such a plan as of January 1, 1954, and makes a return on the basis of the calendar year, he will have until March 15, 1955, to amend his plan so as to make it satisfy the requirements of section 401(a) (3), (4), (5), and (6) for the calendar year 1954 provided that by March 15, 1955, all provisions of such plan necessary to satisfy such requirements are in effect and have been made retroactive for all purposes to January 1, 1954, the effective date of the plan. If an employer is on a fiscal year basis, for example, April 1 to March 31, and in 1954 adopts such a plan effective as of April 1, 1954, he will have until June 15, 1955, to amend his plan so as to make it satisfy the requirements of section 401(a) (3), (4), (5), and (6) for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 1954, provided that by June 15, 1955, all provisions of such plan necessary to satisfy such requirements are in effect and have been made retroactive for all purposes to April 1, 1954, the effective date of the plan. It should be noted that under section 401(b) the period in which a plan may

be amended to qualify under section 401(a) ends before the date on which taxpayers other than corporations are required to file income tax returns. See section 6072. This section shall not apply to any pension, profit-sharing, stock bonus, or annuity plan put into effect after September 1, 1974, and shall not apply with respect to any disqualifying provision to which § 1.401(b)-1 applies.

[T.D. 6500, 25 FR 11674, Nov. 26, 1960; as amended by T.D. 7436, 41 FR 42653, Sept. 28, 1976]

**§ 1.401-6 Termination of a qualified plan.**

(a) *General rules.* (1) In order for a pension, profit-sharing, or stock bonus trust to satisfy the requirements of section 401, the plan of which such trust forms a part must expressly provide that, upon the termination of the plan or upon the complete discontinuance of contributions under the plan, the rights of each employee to benefits accrued to the date of such termination or discontinuance, to the extent then funded, or the rights of each employee to the amounts credited to his account at such time, are nonforfeitable. As to what constitutes nonforfeitable rights of an employee, see paragraph (a)(2) of § 1.402(b)-1.

(2)(i) A qualified plan must also provide for the allocation of any previously unallocated funds to the employees covered by the plan upon the termination of the plan or the complete discontinuance of contributions under the plan. Such provision may be incorporated in the plan at its inception or by an amendment made prior to the termination of the plan or the discontinuance of contributions thereunder.

(ii) Any provision for the allocation of unallocated funds is acceptable if it specifies the method to be used and does not conflict with the provisions of section 401(a)(4) and the regulations thereunder. The allocation of unallocated funds may be in cash or in the form of other benefits provided under the plan. However, the allocation of the funds contributed by the employer among the employees need not necessarily benefit all the employees covered by the plan. For example, an

allocation may be satisfactory if priority is given to benefits for employees over the age of 50 at the time of the termination of the plan, or those who then have at least 10 years of service, if there is no possibility of discrimination in favor of employees who are officers, shareholders, employees whose principal duties consist in supervising the work of other employees, or highly compensated employees.

(iii) Subdivisions (i) and (ii) of this subparagraph do not require the allocation of amounts to the account of any employee if such amounts are not required to be used to satisfy the liabilities with respect to employees and their beneficiaries under the plan (see section 401(a)(2)).

(b) *Termination defined.* (1) Whether a plan is terminated is generally a question to be determined with regard to all the facts and circumstances in a particular case. For example, a plan is terminated when, in connection with the winding up of the employer's trade or business, the employer begins to discharge his employees. However, a plan is not terminated, for example, merely because an employer consolidates or replaces that plan with a comparable plan. Similarly, a plan is not terminated merely because the employer sells or otherwise disposes of his trade or business if the acquiring employer continues the plan as a separate and distinct plan of its own, or consolidates or replaces that plan with a comparable plan. See paragraph (d)(4) of § 1.381(c)(11)-1 for the definition of comparable plan. In addition, the Commissioner may determine that other plans are comparable for purposes of this section.

(2) For purposes of this section, the term *termination* includes both a partial termination and a complete termination of a plan. Whether or not a partial termination of a qualified plan occurs when a group of employees who have been covered by the plan are subsequently excluded from such coverage either by reason of an amendment to the plan, or by reason of being discharged by the employer, will be determined on the basis of all the facts and circumstances. Similarly, whether or not a partial termination occurs when benefits or employer contributions are