

Internal Revenue Service, Treasury

§ 1.402(f)-1

trustee is the controlling date in determining whether or not the contribution was made to the trust after June 1, 1949.

[T.D. 6500, 25 FR 11679, Nov. 26, 1960, as amended by T.D. 6885, 31 FR 7801, June 2, 1966]

§ 1.402(e)-1 Certain plan terminations.

Distributions made after December 31, 1953, and before January 1, 1955, as a result of the complete termination of an employees' trust described in section 401(a) which is exempt under section 501(a) shall be considered distributions on account of separation from service for purposes of section 402(a)(2) if the employer who established the trust is a corporation, and the termination of the plan is incident to the complete liquidation of the corporation before August 16, 1954, regardless of whether such liquidation is incident to a reorganization as defined in section 368.

[T.D. 6500, 25 FR 11680, Nov. 26, 1960]

§ 1.402(f)-1 Required explanation of eligible rollover distributions; questions and answers.

The following questions and answers concern the written explanation requirement imposed by section 402(f) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 relating to distributions eligible for rollover treatment. Section 402(f) was amended by section 521(a) of the Unemployment Compensation Amendments of 1992, Public Law 102-318, 106 Stat. 290 (UCA). For additional UCA guidance under sections 401(a)(31), 402(c), 403(b)(8) and (10), and 3405(c), see §§ 1.401(a)(31)-1, 1.402(c)-2, 1.403(b)-2, and 1.3405(c)-1 of this chapter, respectively.

LIST OF QUESTIONS

Q-1: What are the requirements for a written explanation under section 402(f)?

Q-2: When must the plan administrator provide the section 402(f) notice to a distributee?

Q-3: Must the plan administrator provide a separate section 402(f) notice for each distribution in a series of periodic payments that are eligible rollover distributions?

Q-4: May a plan administrator post the section 402(f) notice as a means of providing it to distributees?

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q-1: What are the requirements for a written explanation under section 402(f)?

A-1: (a) *General rule.* Under section 402(f), as amended by UCA, the plan administrator of a qualified plan is required, within a reasonable period of time before making an eligible rollover distribution, to provide the distributee with the written explanation described in section 402(f) (section 402(f) notice). The section 402(f) notice must be designed to be easily understood and must explain the following: the rules under which the distributee may elect that the distribution be paid in the form of a direct rollover to an eligible retirement plan; the rules that require the withholding of tax on the distribution if it is not paid in a direct rollover; the rules under which the distributee may defer tax on the distribution if it is contributed in a rollover to an eligible retirement plan within 60 days of the distribution; and if applicable, certain special rules regarding the taxation of the distribution as described in section 402(d) (averaging with respect to lump sum distributions) and (e) (other rules including treatment of net unrealized appreciation). See § 1.401(a)(31)-1, Q&A-7 for additional information that must be provided if a plan provides a default procedure regarding the election of a direct rollover.

(b) *Model section 402(f) notice.* The plan administrator will be deemed to have complied with the requirements of paragraph (a) of this Q&A-1 relating to the contents of the section 402(f) notice if the plan administrator provides the applicable model section 402(f) notice published by the Internal Revenue Service for this purpose in a revenue ruling, notice, or other guidance published in the Internal Revenue Bulletin. See § 601.601(d)(2)(ii)(b) of this chapter.

(c) *Delegation to Commissioner.* The Commissioner, in revenue rulings, notices, and other guidance, published in the Internal Revenue Bulletin, may modify, or provide any additional guidance with respect to, the notice requirement of this section. See § 601.601(d)(2)(ii)(b) of this chapter.

(d) *Effective date*—(1) *Statutory effective date.* Section 402(f) applies to eligible rollover distributions made after December 31, 1992.

(2) *Regulatory effective date.* This section applies to eligible rollover distributions made on or after October 19, 1995. For eligible rollover distributions made on or after January 1, 1993 and before October 19, 1995, §1.402(c)-2T, Q&A-11 through 15 (as it appeared in the April 1, 1995 edition of 26 CFR part 1), apply. However, for any distribution made on or after January 1, 1993 but before October 19, 1995, a plan administrator or payor may satisfy the requirements of section 402(f) by substituting any or all provisions of this section for the corresponding provisions of §1.402(c)-1T, Q&A-11 through 15, if any.

Q-2: When must the plan administrator provide the section 402(f) notice to a distributee?

A-2: The plan administrator must provide the section 402(f) notice to a distributee at a time that satisfies either paragraph (a) or (b) of this Q&A-2.

(a) This paragraph (a) is satisfied if the plan administrator provides a distributee with the section 402(f) notice no less than 30 days and no more than 90 days before the date of a distribution. However, if the distributee, after having received the section 402(f) notice, affirmatively elects a distribution, a plan will not fail to satisfy section 402(f) merely because the distribution is made less than 30 days after the section 402(f) notice was provided to the distributee, provided the plan administrator clearly indicates to the distributee that the distributee has a right to consider the decision of whether or not to elect a direct rollover for at least 30 days after the notice is provided. The plan administrator may use any method to inform the distributee of the relevant time period, provided that the method is reasonably designed to attract the attention of the distributee. For example, this information could be either provided in the section 402(f) notice or stated in a separate document (e.g., attached to the election form) that is provided at the same time as the notice. For purposes of satisfying the requirement in the first sentence of paragraph (a) of this Q&A-

2, the plan administrator may substitute the annuity starting date, within the meaning of §1.401(a)-20, Q&A-10, for the date of the distribution.

(b) This paragraph (b) is satisfied if the plan administrator—

(1) Provides a distributee with the section 402(f) notice;

(2) Provides the distributee with a summary of the section 402(f) notice within the time period described in paragraph (a) of this Q&A-2; and

(3) If the distributee so requests after receiving the summary described in paragraph (b)(2) of this Q&A-2, provides the section 402(f) notice to the distributee without charge and no less than 30 days before the date of a distribution (or the annuity starting date), subject to the rules for the distributee's waiver of that 30-day period. The summary described in paragraph (b)(2) of this Q&A-2 must set forth a summary of the principal provisions of the section 402(f) notice, must refer the distributee to the most recent version of the section 402(f) notice (and, in the case of a notice provided in any document containing information in addition to the notice, must identify that document and must provide a reasonable indication of where the notice may be found in that document, such as by index reference or by section heading), and must advise the distributee that, upon request, a copy of the section 402(f) notice will be provided without charge.

Q-3: Must the plan administrator provide a separate section 402(f) notice for each distribution in a series of periodic payments that are eligible rollover distributions?

A-3: No. In the case of a series of periodic payments that are eligible rollover distributions, the plan administrator is permitted to satisfy section 402(f) with respect to each payment in the series by providing the section 402(f) notice prior to the first payment in the series, in accordance with the rules in Q&A-1 and Q&A-2 of this section, and providing the notice at least once annually for as long as the payments continue. However, see §1.401(a)(31)-1, Q&A-12 for additional guidance if the plan administrator intends to treat a distributee's election to make or not make a direct rollover

with respect to one payment in a series of periodic payments as applicable to all subsequent payments in the series (absent a subsequent change of election).

Q-4: May a plan administrator post the section 402(f) notice as a means of providing it to distributees?

A-4: No. The posting of the section 402(f) notice will not be considered provision of the notice. The written notice must be provided individually to any distributee of an eligible rollover distribution within the time period described in Q&A-2 and Q&A-3 of this section.

Q-5: Will the requirements of section 402(f) be satisfied if a plan administrator provides a distributee with the section 402(f) notice or the summary of the notice described in paragraph (b)(2) of Q&A-2 of this section other than through a written paper document?

A-5: A plan administrator may provide a distributee with the section 402(f) notice or the summary of that notice described in paragraph (b)(2) of Q&A-2 of this section either on a written paper document or through an electronic medium reasonably accessible to the distributee. A notice or summary provided through an electronic medium must be provided under a system that satisfies the following requirements:

(a) The system must be reasonably designed to provide the notice or summary in a manner no less understandable to the distributee than a written paper document.

(b) At the time the notice or summary is provided, the distributee must be advised that the distributee may request and receive the notice on a written paper document at no charge, and, upon request, that document must be provided to the distributee at no charge.

Q-6: Are there examples that illustrate the provisions of Q&A-2 and Q&A-5 of this section?

A-6: The following examples illustrate the provisions of Q&A-2 and Q&A-5 of this section:

Example 1. (i) A qualified plan (Plan A) permits participants to request distributions by e-mail. Under Plan A's system for such transactions, a participant must enter his or her account number and personal identification number (PIN); this information must

match that in Plan A's records in order for the transaction to proceed. If a participant requests a distribution from Plan A by e-mail and the distribution is an eligible rollover distribution, the plan administrator provides the participant with a section 402(f) notice by e-mail. The plan administrator also advises the participant that he or she may request the section 402(f) notice on a written paper document and that, if the participant requests the notice on a written paper document, it will be provided at no charge. To proceed with the distribution by e-mail, the participant must acknowledge receipt, review, and comprehension of the section 402(f) notice.

(ii) In *Example 1*, Plan A does not fail to satisfy the notice requirement of section 402(f) merely because the notice is provided to the participant other than through a written paper document.

Example 2. (i) A qualified plan (Plan B) permits participants to request distributions through the Plan B web site (Internet or intranet). Under Plan B's system for such transactions, a participant must enter his or her account number and personal identification number (PIN); this information must match that in Plan B's records in order for the transaction to proceed. A participant may request a distribution from Plan B by following the applicable instructions on the Plan B web site. After the participant has requested a distribution that is an eligible rollover distribution, the participant is automatically shown a page on the web site containing a section 402(f) notice. Although this page of the web site may be printed, the page also advises the participant that he or she may request the section 402(f) notice on a written paper document by calling a telephone number indicated on the web page and that, if the participant requests the notice on a written paper document, it will be provided at no charge. To proceed with the distribution by e-mail, the participant must acknowledge receipt, review, and comprehension of the section 402(f) notice.

(ii) In this *Example 2*, Plan B does not fail to satisfy the notice requirement of section 402(f) merely because the notice is provided to the participant other than through a written paper document.

Example 3. (i) A qualified plan (Plan C) permits participants to request distributions through Plan C's automated telephone system. Under Plan C's system for such transactions, a participant must enter his or her account number and personal identification number (PIN); this information must match that in Plan C's records in order for the transaction to proceed. Plan C provides the section 402(f) notice in the summary plan description, the most recent version of which was distributed to participants in 1997. A participant may request a distribution from

§ 1.402(g)-0

26 CFR Ch. I (4-1-04 Edition)

Plan C by following the applicable instructions on the automated telephone system. In 1999, a participant, using Plan C's automated telephone system, requests a distribution that is an eligible rollover distribution. The automated telephone system refers the participant to the most recent version of the section 402(f) notice which was provided in the summary plan description, informs the participant where the section 402(f) notice may be located in the summary plan description, and provides an oral summary of the material provisions of the section 402(f) notice. The system also advises the participant that the participant may request the section 402(f) notice on a written paper document and that, if the participant requests the notice on a written paper document, it will be provided at no charge. Before proceeding with the distribution, the participant must acknowledge receipt, review, and comprehension of the summary. Under Plan C's system for processing such transactions, the participant's distribution will be made no more than 90 days and no fewer than 30 days after the participant requests the distribution and receives the summary of the section 402(f) notice (unless the participant waives the 30-day period).

(ii) In this *Example 3*, Plan C does not fail to satisfy the notice requirement of section 402(f) merely because Plan C provides a summary of the section 402(f) notice or merely because the summary is provided to the participant other than through a written paper document.

Example 4. (i) Same facts as *Example 3*, except that, pursuant to Plan C's system for processing such transactions, a participant who so requests is transferred to a customer service representative whose conversation with the participant is recorded. The customer service representative provides the summary of the section 402(f) notice by reading from a prepared text.

(ii) In this *Example 4*, Plan C does not fail to satisfy the notice requirement of section 402(f) merely because Plan C provides a summary of the section 402(f) notice or merely because the summary of the section 402(f) notice is provided to the participant other than through a written paper document.

Example 5. (i) Same facts as *Example 3*, except that Plan C does not provide the section 402(f) notice in the summary plan description. Instead, the automated telephone system reads the section 402(f) notice to the participant.

(ii) In this *Example 5*, Plan C does not satisfy the notice requirement of section 402(f) because oral delivery alone of the section 402(f) notice through the automated telephone system is not sufficient.

Example 6. (i) The facts are the same as in *Example 1*, except that Participant D requested a distribution by e-mail, then terminated employment, and, following the termi-

nation, no longer has reasonable access to Plan A e-mail.

(ii) In this *Example 6*, Plan A does not satisfy the notice requirement of section 402(f) because the electronic medium through which the notice is provided is not reasonably accessible to Participant D. Plan A must provide the section 402(f) notice to Participant D in a written paper document or by an electronic means that is reasonably accessible to Participant D.

[T.D. 8619, 60 FR 49213, Sept. 22, 1995, as amended by T.D. 8873, 65 FR 6005, Feb. 8, 2000]

§ 1.402(g)-0 Limitation on exclusion for elective deferrals, table of contents.

This section contains the captions that appear in § 1.402(g)-1.

§ 1.402(g)-1 Limitation on exclusion for elective deferrals.

- (a) In general.
- (b) Elective deferrals.
- (c) Certain one-time irrevocable elections.
- (d) Applicable limit.
 - (1) In general.
 - (2) Special adjustment for elective deferrals with respect to a section 403(b) annuity contract.
 - (3) Special adjustment for elective deferrals with respect to a section 403(b) annuity contract for certain long-term employees.
 - (4) Example.
- (e) Treatment of excess deferrals.
 - (1) Plan qualification.
 - (i) Effect of excess deferrals.
 - (ii) Treatment of excess deferrals as employer contributions.
 - (iii) Definition of excess deferrals.
 - (2) Correction of excess deferrals after the taxable year.
 - (3) Correction of excess deferrals during taxable year.
 - (4) Plan provisions.
 - (5) Income allocable to excess deferrals.
 - (i) General rule.
 - (ii) Method of allocating income.
 - (iii) Alternative method of allocating income.
 - (iv) Safe harbor method of allocating gap period income.
 - (6) Coordination with distribution or re-characterization of excess contributions.
 - (7) No employee or spousal consent required.
 - (8) Tax treatment.
 - (i) Corrective distributions on or before April 15 after close of taxable year.
 - (ii) Special rule for 1987 and 1988 excess deferrals.
 - (iii) Distributions of excess deferrals after correction period.
 - (9) No reduction of required minimum distribution.