Example. X is a participant in a qualified defined benefit plan maintained by his employer. The plan has a calendar year limitation year. Under the terms of the plan, X is entitled to a benefit consisting of a straight life annuity equal to 100 percent of X's compensation for his high 3 years of service. X's average compensation for his high 3 years is $20,000. X separates from the service of his employer on October 3, 1980, with a nonforfeitable right to his accrued benefit, and begins to receive benefit payments on November 1, 1980. Assume that the adjusted dollar limitation for 1980 is $100,000 and that the adjusted dollar limitation for 1981 is $110,000. For the limitation year beginning January 1, 1981 (the first limitation year beginning after X separates from service), the compensation limitation applicable to X may be adjusted for cost of living increases by multiplying the annual adjustment factor by $20,000. The annual adjustment factor for this limitation year is a fraction, the numerator of which is $110,000 (the adjusted dollar limitation for the limitation year in which the compensation limitation is being adjusted) and the denominator of which is $100,000 (the adjusted dollar limitation for the limitation year in which X separates from service). Thus, for the limitation year beginning January 1, 1981, if the plan provides for post-retirement cost of living adjustments, X's maximum annual benefit could be increased to $22,000 ($110,000/$100,000×$20,000).

(c) *Automatic cost of living adjustments of dollar limitation*—(1) *General rule.* A defined benefit plan may include a provision which provides for an annual automatic cost-of-living adjustment of the dollar limitation described in section 415(b)(1)(A) in accordance with paragraph (a) of this section. However, the provision may only provide for scheduled annual increases in the dollar limitation which become effective no sooner than the date determined in accordance with paragraph (a)(2) of this section.

(2) *Example.* The provisions of this paragraph may be illustrated by the following example:

Example. Plan A is a defined benefit plan. Effective January 1, 1976, the plan was amended to limit all participants' annual plan benefits, determined on a straight life annuity basis, to $75,000. The amendment also provides that, "as of January 1 of each calendar year, the dollar limitation as determined by the Commissioner of Internal Revenue for that calendar year will become effective as the Maximum Permissible Dollar Amount of the plan for that calendar year. The Maximum Permissible Dollar Amount for a calendar year applies to limitation years ending with or within that calendar year." The amendment providing for an automatic cost-of-living adjustment of the dollar limitation of Plan A is an example of a provision which satisfies the requirements of subparagraph (1) of this paragraph.

[T.D. 7748, 46 FR 1704, Jan. 7, 1981]

§ 1.415–6 Limitation for defined contribution plans.

(a) *General rules*—(1) *Maximum limitations.* Under section 415(c) and this section, to satisfy the provisions of section 415(a) for any limitation year, the annual additions (as defined in paragraph (b) of this section credited to the account of a participant in a defined contribution plan (as defined in section 414(i))) for the limitation year may not exceed the lesser of—

(i) $25,000, or

(ii) 25 percent of the participant's compensation (as defined in subparagraph (3) of this paragraph) for the limitation year.

(2) *Adjustment to dollar limitation.* The dollar limitation described in section 415(c)(1)(A) and subparagraph (1)(i) of this paragraph is adjusted for cost of living increases under section 415(d) and paragraph (d) of this section. The adjusted figure is effective as of January 1 of each calendar year and applies to limitation years that end during that calendar year.

(3) *Participant's compensation.* For purposes of this section, the term "participant's compensation" for any limitation year has the same meaning as set forth in §1.415–2(d). The term "participant's compensation" includes all compensation actually paid or made available to the individual for the entire limitation year even though the individual may not have been a participant for the entire limitation year.

(4) *Section 403(b) annuity contracts.* For special rules with respect to section 403(b) annuity contracts purchased by educational organizations, hospitals and home health service agencies, see paragrpah (e) of this section.

(b) *Annual additions*—(1) *In general*—(i) *Limitation years beginning after December 31, 1986.* For limitation years beginning after December 31, 1986, or such later date provided in paragraph (b)(1)(iii) of this section, the term "annual addition" means, for purposes of

this section, the sum, credited to a participant's account for any limitation year, of:

(A) Employer contributions;

(B) Employee contributions; and

(C) Forfeitures.

Contributions do not fail to be annual additions merely because they are excess deferrals, excess contributions, or excess aggregate contributions or merely because excess contributions or excess aggregate contributions are corrected through distribution or recharacterization. Excess deferrals that are distributed in accordance with §1.402(g)–1(e) (2) or (3) are not annual additions.

(ii) *Limitation years beginning before January 1, 1987.* For limitation years beginning before January 1, 1987, or such later date provided in paragraph (b)(1)(iii) of this section, the term "annual addition" means, for purposes of this section, the sum, credited to a participant's account for any limitation year, of:

(A) Employer contributions;

(B) The lesser of the amount of employee contributions in excess of 6 percent of compensation (as defined in paragraph (a)(3) of this section) for the limitation year, or one-half of the employee contributions for that year; and

(C) Forfeitures.

(iii) *Certain collectively bargained plans.* In the case of a plan maintained pursuant to one or more collective bargaining agreements between employee representatives and one or more employers ratified before March 1, 1986, for contributions or benefits pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement, the date specified in this paragraph is:

(A) September 31, 1991, in the case of paragraph (b)(1)(i) of this section; and

(B) October 1, 1991, in the case of paragraph (b)(1)(ii) of this section.

(2) *Employer contributions.* (i) For purposes of paragraph (b)(1)(i) of this section, the term "annual additions" includes employer contributions which are made under the plan. Furthermore, the Commissioner may in an appropriate case, considering all of the facts and circumstances treat transactions between the plan and the employer or certain allocations to participants' accounts as giving rise to annual additions.

(ii) If, in a particular limitation year, an employer contributes an amount to a participant's account because of an erroneous forfeiture in a prior limitation year, or because of an erroneous failure to allocate amounts in a prior limitation year, the contribution will not be considered an annual addition with respect to the participant for that particular limitation year, but will be considered an annual addition for the limitation year to which it relates. An example of a situation in which an employer contribution might occur under the circumstances described in the preceding sentence is a retroactive crediting of service for an employee under 29 CFR 2530.200(b)–2(a)(3) (regulations promulgated by the Department of Labor) in accordance with an award of back pay. For purposes of this subdivision, if the amount so contributed in the particular limitation year takes into account actual investment gains attributable to the period subsequent to the year to which the contribution relates, the portion of the total contribution which consists of such gains is not considered as an annual addition for any limitation year. The rule described in this subdivision is only applicable for purposes of applying the limitations of section 415.

(iii) The restoration of an employee's accrued benefits by the employer in accordance with section 411(a)(3)(D) or section 411(a)(7)(C) will not be considered an annual addition for the limitation year in which the restoration occurs. (See §1.411(a)–7(d)(6)(iii)(B).)

(iv) The transfer of funds from one qualified plan to another will not be considered an annual addition for the limitation year in which the transfer occurs.

(v) In the case of a defined contribution plan (such as a money purchase pension plan) to which an employer makes a contribution in order to reduce an accumulated funding deficiency (as defined in section 412(a)), the contribution will be considered an annual addition for the limitation year when the contribution was otherwise required to have been made. The special rule provided in the preceding sentence is available however, only if the contribution is allocated to those participants who would have received an

addition if the contribution had been timely made. For purposes of determining the amount of the annual addition under this subdivision, any reasonable amount of interest paid by the employer is disregarded. However, any interest paid by the employer that is in excess of a reasonable amount, as determined by the Commissioner, is taken into account as an annual addition for the limitation year when the contribution was otherwise required to have been made.

(vi) In the case of a defined contribution plan (such as a money purchase pension plan) for which there has been a waiver of the minimum funding standard in a prior limitation year in accordance with section 412(d), that portion of an employer contribution in a subsequent limitation year which, if not for the waiver, would have otherwise been required in the prior limitation year under section 412(a) will be considered an annual addition for the prior limitation year. For purposes of determining the amount of such annual addition for the prior limitation year, any reasonable amount of interest paid by the employer in addition to the actual make-up contribution is disregarded. However, any interest paid by the employer that is in excess of a reasonable amount, as determined by the Commissioner, is taken into account as an annual addition for the prior limitation year.

(3) *Employee contributions.* For purposes of paragraph (b)(1)(ii) of this section, the term "annual additions" includes, to the extent employee contributions would otherwise be taken into account under this section as an annual addition, mandatory employee contributions (as defined in section 411(c)(2)(C) and the regulations thereunder) as well as voluntary employee contributions. The term "annual additions" does not include—

(i) Rollover contributions (as defined in section 402(a)(5), 403(a)(4), 408(d)(3) and 409(b)(3)(C)),

(ii) Repayments of loans made to a participant from the plan,

(iii) Repayments of amounts described in section 411(a)(7)(B) (in accordance with section 411(a)(7)(C)) and section 411(a)(3)(D) (see §1.411(a)–7(d)(6)(iii)(B)),

The direct transfer of employee contributions from one qualified plan to another.

However, the Commissioner may in an appropriate case, considering all of the facts and circumstances, treat transactions between the plan and the employee or certain allocations to participants' accounts as giving rise to annual additions.

(4) *Contributions other than cash.* For purposes of this paragraph, a contribution by the employer or employee of property other than cash will be considered to be a contribution in an amount equal to the fair market value (as defined in §20.2031–1 of the Estate Tax Regulations) of the property on the date the contribution is made. The contribution described in this subparagraph may, however, constitute a prohibited transaction within the meaning of section 4975(c)(1).

(5) *Forfeitures.* With respect to a particular limitation year, forfeitures (as well as any income attributable to the forfeiture) will be considered to be an annual addition to the plan if such forfeitures are allocated to the account of the participant as of any day within that limitation year.

(6) *Excess annual additions.* If, as a result of the allocation of forfeitures, a reasonable error in estimating a participant's annual compensation, a reasonable error in determining the amount of elective deferrals (within the meaning of section 402(g)(3)) that may be made with respect to any individual under the limits of section 415, or under other limited facts and circumstances that the Commissioner finds justify the availability of the rules set forth in this paragraph (b)(6), the annual additions under the terms of a plan for a particular participant would cause the limitations of section 415 applicable to that participant for the limitation year to be exceeded, the excess amounts shall not be deemed annual additions in that limitation year if they are treated in accordance with any one of the following:

(i) The excess amounts in the participant's account must be allocated and reallocated to other participants in the plan. However, if the allocation or reallocation of the excess amounts pursuant to the provisions of the plan causes

the limitations of section 415 to be exceeded with respect to each plan participant for the limitation year, then these amounts must be held unallocated in a suspense account. If a suspense account is in existence at any time during a particular limitation year, other than the limitation year described in the preceding sentence, all amounts in the suspense account must be allocated and reallocated to participants' accounts (subject to the limitations of section 415) before any employer contributions and employee contributions which would constitute annual additions may be made to the plan for that limitation year.

(ii) The excess amounts in the paticipant's account must be used to reduce employer contributions for the next limitation year (and succeeding limitation years, as necessary) for that participant if that participant is covered by the plan of the employer as of the end of the limitation year. However, if that participant is not covered by the plan of the employer as of the end of the limitation year, then the excess amounts must be held unallocated in a suspense account for the limitation year and allocated and reallocated in the next limitation year to all of the remaining participants in the plan in accordance with the rules set forth in paragraph (b)(6)(i) of this section. Furthermore, the excess amounts must be used to reduce employer contributions for the next limitation year (and succeeding limitation years, as necessary) for all of the remaining participants in the plan. For purposes of this subdivision, excess amounts may not be distributed to participants or former participants.

(iii) The excess amounts in the participant's account must be held unallocated in a suspense account for the limitation year and allocated and reallocated in the next limitation year to all of the participants in the plan in accordance with the rules provided in paragraph (b)(6)(i) of this section. The excess amounts must be used to reduce employer contributions for the next limitation year (and succeeding limitation years, as necessary) for all of the participants in the plan. For purposes of this subdivision, excess amounts may not be distributed to participants or former participants.

(iv) Notwithstanding paragraph (b)(6)(i), (ii), or (iii) of this section, the plan may provide for the distribution of elective deferrals (within the meaning of section 402(g)(3)) or the return of employee contributions (whether voluntary or mandatory), and for the distribution of gains attributable to those elective deferrals and employee contributions, to the extent that the distribution or return would reduce the excess amounts in the participant's account. These distributed or returned amounts are disregarded for purposes of section 402(g), the actual deferral percentage test of section 401(k)(3), and the actual contribution percentage test of section 401(m)(2). However, the return of mandatory employee contributions may result in discrimination in favor of highly compensated employees. If the plan does not provide for the return of gains attributable to the returned employee contributions, such earnings will be considered as an employee contribution for the limitation year in which the returned contribution was made. For limitation years beginning after December 31, 1995, if a plan does not provide for the distribution of gains attributable to the distributed elective deferrals, such earnings will be considered as an employer contribution for the limitation year in which the distributed elective deferral was made. If a suspense account is in existence at any time during the limitation year in accordance with this subparagraph, investment gains and losses and other income may, but need not, be allocated to the suspense account. To the extent that investment gains or other income or investment losses are allocated to the suspense account, the entire amount allocated to participants from the suspense account, including any such gains or other income or less any such losses, is considered as the annual addition. See §1.401(a)–2(b) for provisions relating to the disposition of a suspense account in existence upon termination of a plan.

(7) *Time when annual additions credited.* (i) For purposes of this paragraph, an annual addition is credited to the account of a participant for a particular limitation year if it is allocated

to the participant's account under the terms of the plan as of any date within that limitation year. However, an amount is not deemed allocated as of any date within a limitation year if such allocation is dependent upon participation in the plan as of any date subsequent to such date.

(ii) For purposes of this subparagraph, employer contributions shall not be deemed credited to a participant's account for a particular limitation year, unless the contributions are actually made to the plan no later than 30 days after the end of the period described in section 404(a)(6) applicable to the taxable year with or within which the particular limitation year ends. If, however, contributions are made by an employer exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(a), the contributions must be made to the plan no later than the 15th day of the sixth calendar month following the close of the taxable year (or fiscal year, if no taxable year) with or within which the particular limitation year ends.

(iii) For purposes of this subparagraph, employee contributions, whether voluntary or mandatory, shall not be deemed credited to a participant's account for a particular limitation year, unless the contributions are actually made to the plan no later than 30 days after the close of that limitation year. However, in the case of employee contributions to an employee stock ownership plan which meets the requirements of either section 301(d) of the Tax Reduction Act of 1975 (89 Stat. 38, §1.46–7) and the regulations thereunder (§1.46–8) or section 409A and the regulations thereunder, such contributions shall be deemed credited to a participant's account in the limitation year for which the contribution is allocated to that account under the terms of the plan, provided that the contributions, or pledges to make the contributions, are actually made no later than the period described in section 404(a)(6) applicable to the taxable year with or within which the particular limitation year ends.

(iv) For purposes of this paragraph, amounts contributed to an individual retirement plan (as described in section 7701(a)(37)) are treated as allocated to the individual's account as of the last day of the limitation year ending with or within the taxable year for which the contribution is made.

(c) *Examples.* The provisions of paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section may be illustrated by the following examples:

Example (1). P is a participant in a qualified profit-sharing plan maintained by his employer, ABC Corporation. The limitation year for the plan is the calendar year. P's compensation (as defined in paragraph (a)(3) of this section) for the current limitation year is $20,000 consisting exclusively of salary. Because the compensation limitation described in section 415(c)(1)(B) applicable to P for the current limitation year is lower than the dollar limitation described in section 415(c)(1)(A) (as adjusted for cost of living increases), the maximum annual addition which can be allocated to P's account for the current limitation year is $5,000 (25 percent of $20,000).

Example (2). Assume the same facts as in Example (1), except that P's compensation for the current limitation year is $140,000. The maximum amount of annual additions that may be allocated to P's account in the current limitation year may not exceed the lesser of $35,000 (25 percent of $140,000) or the dollar limitation as in effect as of January 1 of the calendar year in which the current limitation year ends.

Example (3). Assume the same facts as in Example (1), except that P's compensation for the current limitation year consists of $20,000 salary and a bonus which is paid to P after the end of the current limitation year. Because the bonus was not actually paid or made available to P within the current limitation year, P's compensation for that year, for purposes of computing the compensation limitation described in section 415(c)(1)(B), may not include the bonus. However, if ABC Corporation had elected under §1.415–2(d)(4) to use the compensation accrued for the current limitation year, then the amount of the bonus which accrued within the current limitation year could have been taken into account.

Example (4). Employer N maintains a qualified profit-sharing plan which uses the calendar year as its plan year and its limitation year. N's taxable year is a fiscal year beginning June 1 and ending May 31. Under the terms of the profit-sharing plan maintained by N, employer contributions are made to the plan two months after the close of N's taxable year and are allocated as of the last day of the plan year ending within the taxable year. Thus, employer contributions for the 1977 calendar year limitation year are made on July 31, 1978 (the date that is two months after the close of N's taxable year ending May 31, 1978) and are allocated as of

December 31, 1977. Because the employer contributions are actually made to the plan no later than 30 days after the end of the period described in section 404(a)(6) with respect to N's taxable year ending May 31, 1978, the contributions will be considered annual additions for the 1977 calendar year limitation year.

Example (5). Assume the same facts as in example (4), except that the plan year for the profit-sharing plan maintained by N is the 12-month period beginning on March 1 and ending on February 28. Under the terms of the plan, an employer contribution which is made to the plan on July 31, 1978, is allocated to participants' accounts as of February 28, 1978. Because the last day of the plan year is in the 1978 calendar year limitation year, and because, under the terms of the plan, employer contributions are allocated to participants' accounts as of the last day of the plan year, the contributions are considered annual additions for the 1978 calendar year limitation year.

Example (6). XYZ Corporation maintains a profit-sharing plan to which a participant may make voluntary employee contributions for any year not to exceed 10 percent of the participant's compensation for the year. The plan permits a participant to make retroactive make-up contributions for any year for which he contributed less than 10 percent of compensation. XYZ uses the calendar year as the plan year and the limitation year. Under the terms of the plan, voluntary employee contributions are credited to a participant's account for a particular limitation year if such contributions are allocated to the participant's account as of any date within that limitation year. Participant A's compensation is as follows:

Limitation year and compensation

1976	$10,000
1977	$12,000
1978	$14,000
1979	$16,000

Participant A makes no voluntary employee contributions during limitation years 1976, 1977 and 1978. On October 1, 1979, participant A makes a voluntary employee contribution of $5,200 (10 percent of A's aggregate compensation for limitation years 1976, 1977, 1978 and 1979 of $52,000). Under the terms of the plan, $1,000 of this 1979 contribution is allocated to A's account as of limitation year 1976; $1,200 is allocated to A's account of limitation year 1977; $1,400 is allocated to A's account as of limitation year 1978, and $1,600 is allocated to A's account as of limitation year 1979. However, under the rule set forth in paragraph (b)(7)(iii) of this section, employee contributions will not be considered credited to a participant's account for a particular limitation year for section 415 purposes unless the contributions are actually made to the plan no later than 30 days after the close of that limitation year. Thus, A's voluntary employee contribution of $5,200 made on October 1, 1979 would be considered as credited to A's account only for the 1979 calendar year limitation year, notwithstanding the plan provisions. (See section 415(c)(2)(B) and paragraph (b)(1)(ii) of this section for provisions relating to the amount of A's contribution that would be considered an annual addition to A's account for the 1979 calendar year limitation year.)

(d) *Cost-of-living adjustment for defined contribution plans*—(1) *In general.* Under section 415(d)(1)(B), the dollar limitation described in section 415(c)(1)(A) applicable to limitation years to which section 415 applies is adjusted annually to take into account increases in the cost of living. See §1.415–5(a) for the procedure for making this adjustment and the effective date of the adjusted dollar limitation.

(2) *Automatic adjustments with respect to dollar limitation.* A defined contribution plan may include a provision which provides for an annual automatic cost of living adjustment of the dollar limitation described in section 415(c)(1)(A).

(e) *Special election for section 403(b) contracts purchased by educational organizations, hospitals and home health service agencies*—(1) *In general.* (i) An annuity contract described in section 403(b) is treated as a defined contribution plan for purposes of the limitations on contributions imposed by section 415. Thus, section 403(b) annuity contracts are subject to the rules regarding the amount of annual additions which may be made to a participant's account for any limitation year under section 415(C)(1) and paragraph (a)(1) of this section. Section 403(b) annuity contracts are also subject to the limitations imposed by section 403(b)(2)(A) with respect to the amount of employer contributions for the purchase of an annuity contract that may be excluded from the gross income of the employee on whose behalf the annuity contract is purchased. Therefore, unless a special election has been made as described in section 415(c)(4) and subparagraph (2) of this paragraph, the excludable amount of a contribution toward the purchase of a section 403(b) annuity contract for a particular taxable year is the lesser of the exclusion

allowance computed under section 403(b)(2)(A) for that taxable year or the limitation imposed by section 415(c)(1) for the limitation year ending with or within that taxable year.

(ii) If the amount of contributions for an individual under a section 403(b) annuity contract for a taxable year exceeds the limitation of section 415(c)(1), then for purposes of computing the exclusion allowance under section 403(b)(2)(A) for future taxable years, the excess contribution is considered as an amount contributed by the employer for an annuity contract which was excludable from the employee's gross income for a prior taxable year under section 403(b)(2)(A)(ii). Thus, for future taxable years the exclusion allowance under section 403(b)(2)(A) is reduced by the amount of the excess contribution even though that amount was not excludable from the employee's gross income in the taxable year when it was made. For a special effective date for the rule provided in this subdivision, see §1.415–1(f)(6).

(iii) For purposes of the limitation imposed by section 415(c)(1), the amount contributed toward the purchase of a section 403(b) annuity contact is treated as allocated to the employee's account as of the last day of the limitation year ending with or within the taxable year during which the contribution is made.

(iv) For rules relating to the limitation year applicable to an individual on whose behalf a section 403(b) annuity contract has been purchased, see §1.415–2(b)(7).

(2) *Alternative limitations.* (i) Under section 415(c)(4) and this paragraph, a special election is permitted with respect to section 403(b) annuity contracts (including custodial accounts treated as section 403(b) annuity contracts) purchased by educational organizations (as described in section 170(b)(1)(A)(ii)), home health service agencies (as described in paragraph (e)(2)(vi) of this section) and hospitals. Instead of the compensation limitation described in section 415(c)(1)(B) otherwise applicable to the amount of annual additions that may be made to the account of a participant in a defined contribution plan in any limitation year, an individual on whose behalf a section 403(b) annuity contract has been purchased may elect to have substituted for such limitation the amounts described in subparagraph (3) ("(A) election limitation") or (4) ("(B) election limitation") of this paragraph. Instead of the exclusion allowance determined under section 403(b)(2)(A) otherwise applicable for the taxable year with or within which the limitation year ends to an individual on whose behalf a section 403(b) annuity contract has been purchased, an individual may elect to have substituted for such exclusion allowance the amount described in paragraph (e)(5) ("(C) election limitation") of this section. The election shall be made at the time and in the manner prescribed in subparagraph (6) of this paragraph.

(ii) With respect to any limitation or taxable year, an election by an individual to have any one of the alternative limitations described in paragraph (e) (3), (4) or (5) of this section apply to contributions made on his behalf by the employer with respect to any section 403(b) annuity contract precludes an election to have any other of the alternative limitations apply for any future limitation or taxable year with respect to any section 403(b) annuity contract purchased by any employer of such individual.

(iii) With respect to any limitation year, an election by an individual to have paragraph (e)(3) of this section ("(A) election limitation") apply to contributions made on his behalf by the employer with respect to any section 403(b) annuity contract precludes an election to have any of the alternative limitations apply for any future limitation or taxable year with respect to any section 403(b) annuity contract purchased by any employer of such individual.

(iv) Any election made under this paragraph is irrevocable.

(v) The election made by the individual under this paragraph shall be controlling for all prior taxable years in which, in accordance with §11.415(c)(4)–1(b), the individual had taken advantage of an alternative limitation, even if inconsistent with the alternative limitation used in determining income tax liability for those taxable years under that section. An

individual, who took advantage of an alternative limitation under §11.415(c)(4)–1(b) which is inconsistent with the one finally elected, may correct this inconsistency for each prior open taxable year in either of two ways. The individual may redetermine income tax liability as though none of the alternative limitations applied for that taxable year. Alternatively, the individual may recompute income tax liability for the particular taxable year in a manner consistent with the alternative limitation elected by the individual under this paragraph rather than the limitation originally used in accordance with §11.415(c)(4)–1(b). Furthermore, if an individual, who had taken advantage of an alternative limitation in prior taxable years under §11.415(c)(4)–1(b), elects under this paragraph not to have any of the alternative limitations apply, the individual, will, nevertheless, be considered to have elected the alternative limitation used under §11.415(c)(4)–1(b). However, the rule described in the preceding sentence is not applicable if the individual recomputes income tax liability for all prior open taxable years in which an alternate limitation was taken advantage of under §11.415(c)(4)–1(b) as though none of the alternative limitations applied for those taxable years. For purposes of section 6654 (relating to the failure of an individual to pay estimated tax), a difference in tax for such years resulting from a difference in these limitations is not treated as an underpayment. This rule only applies to the extent the difference in tax is due to the election of one of the alternative limitations or to a final election not to use one of the alternative limitations.

(vi) For purposes of this paragraph, a home health service agency is an organization described in section 501(c)(3) which is exempt from tax under section 501(a) and which has been determined by the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare to be a home health service agency under section 1395x(o) of Title 42 of the United States Code.

(3) "*(A) election limitation*." For the limitation year that ends with or within the taxable year in which an individual eligible to make a special election separates from the service of his employer (and only for that limitation year), the "(A) election limitation" is the exclusion allowance computed under section 403(b)(2)(A) for the individual's taxable year in which the separation occurs (without regard to section 415). However, in determining this limitation, there may only be taken into account the individual's years of service for the employer (as defined in section 403(b)(4) and the regulations thereunder) and contributions made by the employer (as described in section 403(b)(2)(A)(ii) and regulations thereunder) during the period of years (not exceeding 10) ending on the date of separation. For purposes of this subparagraph, all service for the employer performed within the period beginning ten years before the date of separation and ending on the separation date must be taken into account. However, the "(A) election limitation" may not exceed the dollar limitation described in section 415(c)(1)(A) (as adjusted for cost-of-living increases under section 415(d)(1) and paragraph (d) of this section) applicable to the individual for the limitation year.

(4) "*(B) election limitation*." For any limitation year with respect to an individual eligible to make a special election, the "(B) election limitation" is equal to the least of the following amounts—

(i) $4,000, plus 25 percent of the participant's includible compensation (as defined in section 403(b)(3) and the regulations thereunder) for the taxable year with or within which the limitation year ends.

(ii) The amount of the exclusion allowance determined under section 403(b)(2)(A) and the regulations thereunder for the taxable year with or within which the limitation year ends.

(iii) $15,000.

(5) "*(C) election limitation*." For any taxable year with respect to an individual eligible to make a special election, the "(C) election limitation" is the lesser of the dollar limitation described in section 415(c)(1)(A) (as adjusted for cost-of-living increases under section 415(d)(1) and paragraph (d) of this section) or the compensation limitation described in section 415(c)(1)(B) applicable to the individual for the limitation year ending with or within that

taxable year. For purposes of determining the compensation limitation under this subparagraph for a particular limitation year, the term "compensation" has the same meaning as set forth in §1.415–2(d).

(6) *Time and method of making election.* (i) With respect to any taxable year, an election by an individual to take advantage of any of the alternative limitations described in subparagraphs (3), (4) or (5) of this paragraph is made by determining income tax liability for that taxable year in a way which is consistent with one of the alternative limitations. However, an individual is only considered to have made an election for a taxable year when the use of one of the alternative limitations is necessary to support the exclusion from gross income reflected in the individual's income tax return for that taxable year.

(ii) In the case of an individual who, in accordance with §11.415(c)(4)–1(b), took advantage of one of the alternative limitations for prior taxable years, the election described in this paragraph to take advantage of an alternative limitation will be effective only if the following two conditions are satisfied. The first condition is that the election must be made (in the manner described in subdivision (i) of this subparagraph) in the individual's income tax return for the taxable year immediately following the taxable year in which final regulations under section 415 are published in the FEDERAL REGISTER. The second condition is that if the individual's election is different from the limitation used under §11.415(c)(4)–1(b) in determining income tax liability for prior taxable years, the individual must correct this inconsistency by recomputing income tax liability for all such prior open taxable years in accordance with paragraph (e)(2)(v) of this section. See paragraph (e)(2)(v) of this section for rules relating to an individual who had taken advantage of an alternative limitation in prior taxable years under §11.415(c)(4)–1(b) but does not elect any of the alternative limitations for the taxable year immediately following the taxable yar in which final regulations under section 415 are published in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

(iii) This subdivision provides a special rule for those individuals who, in accordance with §11.415(c)(4)–1(b), took advantage of one of the alternative limitations for prior taxable years, but who are not participating in a section 403(b) annuity program in the taxable year following the taxable year in which final regulations under section 415 are published in the FEDERAL REGISTER. In such a situation, the election described in this paragraph to take advantage of an alternative limitation (or, alternatively, not to elect any of the alternative limitations) is made by the individual by attaching a statement to the income tax return for the taxable year following the taxable year in which final section 415 regulations are published in the FEDERAL REGISTER. The statement must include the individual's name, address, Social Security number, the name of the section 403(b) annuity program in which the individual participated and a statement indicating the election being made. See paragraph (e)(2)(v) of this section for rules relating to the situation where the individual described in this subdivision chooses not to elect any of the alternative limitations.

(7) *Examples:* The provisions of this paragraph may be illustrated by the following examples:

Example (1). Doctor M is an employee of H Hospital (an organization described in section 501(c)(3) and exempt from taxation under section 501(a)) for the entire 1976 calendar year. M is not in control of any employer within the meaning of section 414 (b) or (c), as modified by section 415(h). M uses the calendar year as the taxable year and limitation year. M has includable compensation (as defined in section 403(b)(3) and the regulations thereunder) and compensation (as defined in paragraph (a)(3) of this section) for taxable year 1976 of $30,000, and M has 4 years of service (as defined in §1.403(b)–1(f)) with H as of December 31, 1976. During M's prior service with H, H had contributed a total of $12,000 on M's behalf for annuity contracts described in section 403(b), which amount was excludable from M's gross income for such prior years. Thus, for the limitation year ending with or within taxable year 1976, M's exclusion allowance determined under section 403(b)(2)(A) is $12,000 ((.20×$30,000×4) − $12,000). The limitation imposed by section 415(c)(1) that is applicable to M for limitation year 1976 is the lesser of $26,825 (the amount described in section 415(c)(1)(A) adjusted under section 415(d)(1)(b)

for limitation year 1976) or $7,500 (the amount described in section 415(c)(1)(B)). Absent the special elections provided in section 415(c)(4) and this paragraph, $7,500 would be the maximum contribution H could make for annuity contracts described in section 403(b) on M's behalf for limitation year 1976 without increasing M's gross income for taxable year 1976. However, because H is an organization described in section 415(c)(4), M may make a special election with respect to amounts contributed by H on M's behalf for section 403(b) annuity contracts for 1976. Assume that M does not separate from the service of H during 1976 and that, therefore, the "(A) election limitation" described in section 415(c)(4)(A) and subparagraph (3) of this paragraph is not available to M. If M elects the "(B) election limitation" for 1976, H could contribute $11,500 on M's behalf for annuity contracts described in section 403(b) for that year (the least of $11,500 (the amount described in section 415(c)(4)(B)(i))); $12,000 (the amount described in section 415(c)(4)(B)(ii)); and $15,000 (the amount described in section 415(c)(4)(B)(iii)). If M elects the "(C) election limitation" for 1976, H could only contribute up to $7,500 (the lower of the amounts described in section 415(c)(1) (A) or (B)) for section 403(b) annuity contracts on M's behalf for 1976 without increasing M's gross income for that year.

Example (2). Assume the same facts as in example (1) except that H had contributed a total of $18,000 on M's behalf for annuity contracts in prior years, which amount was excludable from M's gross income for such prior years. Accordingly, for 1976, M's exclusion allowance determined under section 403(b)(2)(A) is $6,000 ((.20×$30,000×4)—$18,000). The limitation imposed by section 415(c)(1) applicable to M for 1976 is $7,500 (the lesser of the amount described in section 415(c)(1) (A) or (B)). Absent the special elections provided in section 415(c)(4) and this paragraph, $6,000 would be the maximum amount H could contribute for annuity contracts described in section 403(b) on M's behalf for 1976 without increasing M's gross income for that year. However, if M elects the "(c) election limitations" for 1976, H may contribute up to $7,500 without increasing M's gross income for that year.

Example (3). G, a teacher, is an employee of E, an educational organization described in section 170(b)(1)(A)(ii). G uses the calendar year as the taxable year and G uses the 12-month consecutive period beginning July 1 as the limitation year. G has includible compensation (as defined in section 403(b)(3) and the regulations thereunder) for taxable year 1976 of $12,000 and G has compensation (as defined in paragraph (a)(3) of this section) for the limitation year ending with or within taxable year 1976 of $12,000. G has 20 years of service (as defined in §1.403(b)–1(f)) as of May 30, 1976, the date G separates from the service of E. During G's service with E before taxable year 1976, E had contributed $34,000 toward the purchase of a section 403(b) annuity contract on G's behalf, which amount was excludable from G's gross income for such prior years. Of this amount, $19,000 was so contributed and excluded during the 10 year period ending on May 30, 1976. For the taxable year 1976, G's exclusion allowance determined under section 403(b)(2)(A) is $14,000 ((.20×$12,000×20)−$34,000). Absent the special elections described in section 415(c)(4) and this paragraph, $3,000 (the lesser of G's exclusion allowance for taxable year 1976 or the section 415(c)(1) limitation applicable to G for the limitation year ending with or within such taxable year) would be the maximum excludable contribution E could make for section 403(b) annuity contracts on G's behalf for the limitation year ending with or within taxable year 1976. However, because E is an organization described in section 415(c)(4), G may make a special election with respect to amounts contributed on G's behalf by E for section 403(b) annuity contracts for the limitation year ending with or within taxable year 1976.

Because G has separated from the service of E during such taxable year, G may elect the "(A) election limitation" as well as the "(B) election limitation" or the "(C) election limitation." If G elects the "(A) election limitation" for the limitation year ending with or within taxable year 1976, E could contribute up to $5,000 ((.20×$12,000×10)−$19,000) on G's behalf for section 403(b) annuity contracts for such limitation year without increasing G's gross income for the taxable year with or within which such limtation year ends. If G elects the "(B) election limitation" for such limitation year, E could contribute $7,000 (the least of $7,000 (the amount described in section 415(c)(4)(B)(i)); $14,000 (the amount described in section 415(c)(4)(B)(ii)); and $15,000 (the amount described in section 415(c)(4)(B)(iii)). If G elects the "(C) election limitation" for taxable year 1976, E could contribute $3,000 (the lesser of the amounts described in section 415(c)(1) (A) or (B)).

(f) *Special rules with respect to the application of section 415(c)(1)(B) with section 404(e)(4).* For special rules relating to the application of the compensation limitation described in section 415(c)(1)(B) with the minimum allowable deduction described in section 404(e)(4) in the case of a plan which provides contributions for employees, some or all of whom are employees within the meaning of section 401(c)(1), see the regulations under section 404(e).

(g) *Special rules for employee stock ownership plans*—(1) *General definitions.* For purposes of this paragraph—(i) An employee stock ownership plan is a plan which meets the requirements of either section 4975(e)(7) and the regulations thereunder, or whichever of the following is applicable: section 301(d) of the Tax Reduction Act of 1975 (89 Stat. 38, 26 CFR 1.46–7) and the regulations thereunder (26 CFR 1.46–8) or section 409A and the regulations thereunder.

(ii) The term "employer securities" means, in the case of an employee stock ownership plan within the meaning of section 4975(e)(7) and the regulations thereunder, qualifying employer securities within the meaning of section 4975(e)(8), that are also described in section 301(d)(9)(A) of the Tax Reduction Act of 1975 and the regulations thereunder or section 409A(l) and the regulations thereunder, whichever is applicable. In the case of an employee stock ownership plan described in section 301(d)(2) of the Tax Reductions Act of 1975 or section 409A, whichever is applicable, such term means employer securities within the meaning of section 301(d)(9)(A) of that Act and the regulations thereunder or section 409A(l) and the regulations thereunder, which ever is applicable.

(iii) An individual is considered to own more than 10 percent of the employer's stock if, without regard to stock held under the employee stock ownership plan, the individual owns (after application of section 1563(e), relating to constructive ownership of stock) more than 10 percent of the total combined voting power of all classes of stock entitled to vote or more than 10 percent of the total value of shares of all classes of stock.

(2) *Special dollar limitation.* In the case of an employee stock ownership plan which meets the requirements of paragraph (g)(3) of this section, the applicable dollar limitation for a limitation year equals the sum of—

(i) The dollar amount described in section 415(c)(1)(A) (as so adjusted for that limitation year), and

(ii) The lesser of the amount determined under paragraph (g)(2)(i) of this section or the amount of employer securities within the meaning of paragraph (g)(1)(ii) of this section contributed to the employee stock ownership plan.

(3) *Employee stock ownership plans to which the special dollar limitation applies.* For purposes of this paragraph, the special dollar limitation is only applicable to an employee stock ownership plan for a particular limitation year for which no more than one-third of the employer contributions for the limitation year are allocated to employees who are officers, shareholders owning more than 10 percent of the employer's stock (as determined under subparagraph (1)(iii) of this paragraph), or whose compensation for the limitation year exceeds twice the dollar amount described in section 415(c)(1)(A) (as adjusted for cost-of-living increases under section 415(d)(1) and paragraph (d) of this section).

(4) *Cash contributions treated as contributions of employer securities.* For purposes of the special dollar limitation—

(i) In the case of an employee stock ownership plan in which the employer makes cash contributions which are used in a direct acquisition of employer securities, the cash contributions are treated as a contribution of employer securities for the limitation year, provided that the securities are employer securities within the meaning of paragraph (g)(1)(ii) of this section and are allocated to participants under the terms of the plan as of any date within that limitation year. However, this subdivision is not applicable unless the following two conditions are satisfied. The first condition is that the employer must contribute the cash to the plan no later than 30 days after the end of the period described in section 404(a)(6) applicable to the taxable year with or within which the particular limitation year ends. The second condition is that the employer securities must be purchased no later than 60 days after the end of the period described in the preceding sentence.

(ii) In the case of an employee stock ownership plan to which an exempt loan as described in §54.4975–7(b) has been made, the employer's contribution of both principal and interest used to repay the exempt loan for the limitation year will be treated as a contribution of employer securities for that limitation year, provided that the

securities allocated to participants are employer securities within the meaning of paragraph (g)(1)(ii) of this section.

(5) *Amounts considered as annual additions.* For purposes of applying the limitations of section 415(c)(1) and this section and for the special dollar limitation, in the case of an employee stock ownership plan to which an exempt loan as described in §54.4975–7(b) has been made, the amount of employer contributions which is considered an annual addition for the limitation year is calculated with respect to employer contributions of both principal and interest used to repay the exempt loan for that limitation year.

(6) *Examples.* The provisions of this paragraph may be illustrated by the following examples:

Example (1). Employee N is a participant in an employee stock ownership plan maintained by his employer, M Corporation, which meets the requirements of section 4975(e)(7) and the regulations thereunder. The plan also meets the requirements set forth in subparagraph (3) of this paragraph. M does not maintain any other qualified plan. The limitation year for the plan is the calendar year. For 1977, N has compensation (as defined in paragraph (a)(3) of this section) of $160,000. Without the special dollar limitation described in subparagraph (2) of this paragraph, under section 415(c)(1), N could only have annual additions of $28,175 (the lesser of the dollar limitation described in section 415(c)(1)(A) as adjusted for cost of living increases ($28,175) or the compensation limitation described in section 415(c)(1)(B) (25% of $160,000=$40,000)) made to his account for the 1977 limitation year. Under the special dollar limitation, N would be able to have annual additions of $56,350 ($28,175×2) made to his account for the 1977 limitation year, provided that amounts contributed in excess of $28,175 consist solely of employer securities. However, N is also subject to the compensation limitation described in section 415(c)(1)(B). Therefore, even under the special dollar limitation, N may only have annual additions of $40,000 made to his account for the 1977 limitation year: *Provided,* That amounts contributed in excess of $28,175 consist solely of employer securities within the meaning of paragraph (g)(1)(ii) of this section.

Example (2). Assume the same facts as in example (1), except that N's compensation for 1977 is $300,000. Because the compensation limitation (25% of $300,000=$75,000) is greater than the special dollar limitation of $56,350, N can have annual additions of $56,350 made to his account for the 1977 limitation year, provided that amounts contributed in excess of $28,175 consist solely of employer securities.

(h) *Special rules for level premium annuity contracts under plans benefiting owner-employees*—(1) *In general.* The compensation limitation described in section 415(c)(1)(B) will not be less than the contribution described in section 401(e) which is made for the benefit of an owner-employee (within the meaning of section 401(c)(3)) for a limitation year provided that—

(i) The annual additions with respect to such owner-employee for the limitation year consist solely of the contributions described in this paragraph, and

(ii) The owner-employee is not a participant at any time during the limitation year in a defined benefit plan maintained by the employer.

(2) *Application of the non-discrimination rules.* In the case of a plan which provides contributions for employees who are not owner-employees, that plan will not be treated as failing to satisfy the non-discrimination rules of section 401(a)(4) merely because contributions made on behalf of employees who are not owner-employees are not permitted to exceed the compensation limitation described in section 415(c)(1)(B).

(3) *Additional rules.* For additional rules concerning contributions described in section 401(e), see §1.401(e)–4.

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§1.415–7 Limitation in case of defined benefit and defined contribution plan for same employee.

(a) *Overall limitation*—(1) *In general.* Under section 415(e) and this section, in any case in which an individual has at any time participated in a defined benefit plan and also has at any time participated in a defined contribution plan maintained by the same employer, to satisfy the provisions of section 415(a), the sum of the defined benefit plan fraction (as defined in paragraph (b) of this section) and the defined contribution plan fraction (as defined in paragraph (c) of this section) with respect