

plant or operation, or other similar conditions; and

(ii) Sick and accident benefits subordinate to the benefits described in subdivision (i) of this subparagraph.

(2) *Employee.* The term *employee* means an individual whose status is that of an employee under the usual common-law rules applicable in determining the employer-employee relationship. The term *employee* also includes an individual who qualifies as an *employee* under the State or Federal unemployment compensation law covering his employment, whether or not such an individual could qualify as an employee under such common-law rules.

(3) *Involuntary separation from the employment of the employer.* Whether a *separation from the employment of the employer* occurs is a question to be decided with regard to all the facts and circumstances. However, for purposes of section 501(c)(17), the term *separation* includes both a temporary separation and a permanent severance of the employment relationship. Thus, for example, an employee may be separated from the employment of his employer even though at the time of separation it is believed that he will be reemployed by the same employer. Whether or not an employee is *involuntarily* separated from the employment of the employer is a question of fact. However, normally, an employee will not be deemed to have separated himself voluntarily from the employment of his employer merely because his collective bargaining agreement provides for the termination of his services upon the happening of a condition subsequent and that condition does in fact occur. For example, if the collective bargaining agreement provides that the employer may automate a given department and thereby dislocate several employees, the fact that the employees' collective bargaining agent has consented to such a condition will not render any employee's subsequent unemployment for such cause voluntary.

(4) *Other similar conditions.* Involuntary separation directly resulting from *other similar conditions* includes, for example, involuntary separation from the employment of the employer resulting from cyclical, seasonal, or techno-

logical causes. Some causes of involuntary separation from the employment of the employer which are not similar to those enumerated in section 501(c)(17)(D)(i) are separation for disciplinary reasons or separation because of age.

(5) *Subordinate sick and accident benefits.* In general, a sick and accident benefit payment is an amount paid to an employee in the event of his illness or personal injury (whether or not such illness or injury results in the employee's separation from the service of his employer). In addition, the phrase *sick and accident benefits* includes amounts provided under the plan to reimburse an employee for amounts he expends because of the illness or injury of his spouse or a dependent (as defined in section 152). Sick and accident benefits may be paid by a trust described in section 501(c)(17) only if such benefits are subordinate to the separation payments provided under the plan of which the trust forms a part. Whether the sick and accident benefits provided under a supplemental unemployment compensation benefit plan are subordinate to the separation benefits provided under such plan is a question to be decided with regard to all the facts and circumstances.

[T.D. 6972, 33 FR 12900, Sept. 12, 1968]

**§ 1.501(c)(17)-2 General rules.**

(a) *Supplemental unemployment compensation benefits.* Supplemental unemployment compensation benefits as defined in section 501(c)(17)(D) and paragraph (b)(1) of § 1.501(c)(17)-1 may be paid in a lump sum or installments. Such benefits may be paid to an employee who has, subsequent to his separation from the employment of the employer, obtained other part-time, temporary, or permanent employment. Furthermore, such payments may be made in cash, services, or property. Thus, supplemental unemployment compensation benefits provided to involuntarily separated employees may include, for example, the following: Furnishing of medical care at an established clinic, furnishing of food, job training and schooling, and job counseling. If such benefits are furnished in services or property, the fair market value of the benefits must satisfy the

requirements of section 501(c)(17)(A)(iii), relating to non-discrimination as to benefits. However, supplemental unemployment compensation benefits may be provided only to an employee and only under circumstances described in paragraph (b)(1) of § 1.501(c)(17)-1. Thus, a trust described in section 501(c)(17) may not provide, for example, for the payment of a death, vacation, or retirement benefit.

(b) *Sick and accident benefits.* If a trust described in section 501(c)(17) provides for the payment of sick and accident benefits, such benefits may only be provided for employees who are eligible for receipt of separation benefits under the plan of which the trust is a part. However, the sick and accident benefits need not be provided for all the employees who are eligible for receipt of separation benefits, so long as the plan does not discriminate in favor of persons with respect to whom discrimination is proscribed in section 501(c)(17)(A) (ii) and (iii). Furthermore, the portion of the plan which provides for the payment of sick and accident benefits must satisfy the non-discrimination requirements of section 501(c)(17)(A) (ii) and (iii) without regard to the portion of the plan which provides for the payment of benefits because of involuntary separation.

(c) *Correlation with other plans.* (1) In determining whether a plan meets the requirements of section 501(c)(17)(A) (ii) and (iii), any benefits provided under any other plan shall not be taken into consideration except in the particular instances enumerated in section 501(c)(17)(B) (i), (ii), and (iii). In general, these three exceptions permit a plan providing for the payment of supplemental unemployment compensation benefits to satisfy the non-discrimination requirements in section 501(c)(17)(A) (ii) and (iii) if the plan is able to satisfy such requirements when it is correlated with one or more of the plans described in section 501(c)(17)(B).

(2) Under section 501(c)(17)(B)(i), a plan will not be considered discriminatory merely because the benefits under the plan which are first determined in a nondiscriminatory manner (within the meaning of section 501(c)(17)(A)) are then reduced by any sick, accident,

or unemployment compensation benefits received under State or Federal law, or are reduced by a portion of these benefits if determined in a non-discriminatory manner. Under this exception, a plan may, for example, satisfy the requirements of section 501(c)(17)(A)(iii) if it provides for the payment of an unemployment benefit and the amount of such benefit is determined as a percentage of the employee's compensation which is then reduced by any unemployment benefit which the employee receives under a State plan. In addition, a plan could provide for the reduction of such a plan benefit by a percentage of the State benefit. Furthermore, a plan may also satisfy the requirements of section 501(c)(17)(A) if it provides for the payment to an employee of an amount which when added to any State unemployment benefit equals a percentage of the employee's compensation.

(3) Under section 501(c)(17)(B)(ii), a plan will not be considered discriminatory merely because the plan provides benefits only for employees who are not eligible to receive sick, accident, or unemployment compensation benefits under State or Federal law. In such a case, however, the benefits provided under the plan seeking to satisfy the requirements of section 501(c)(17) must be the same benefits, or a portion of the same benefits if determined in a nondiscriminatory manner, which such ineligible employees would receive under State or Federal law if they were eligible for such benefits. Under this exception, for example, an employer may establish a plan only for employees who have exhausted their benefits under the State law, and, if the plan provides for such employees the same benefits which they would receive under the State plan, the State plan and the plan of the employer will be considered as one plan in determining whether the requirements relating to nondiscrimination in section 501(c)(17)(A) are satisfied. Furthermore, such a plan could also qualify even though it does not provide all of the benefits provided under the State plan. Thus, a plan could provide for the payment of a reduced amount of the benefits, or for the payment of only certain of the types of benefits, provided by the

State plan. For example, if the State plan provides for the payment of sick, accident, and separation benefits, the plan of the employer may provide for the payment of only separation benefits, or for the payment of an amount equal to only one-half of the State provided benefit. However, if a plan provides benefits for employees who are not eligible to receive the benefits provided under a State plan and such benefits are greater or of a different type than those under the State plan, the plan of the employer must satisfy the requirements of section 501(c)(17)(A) without regard to the benefits and coverage provided by the State plan.

(4) Under section 501(c)(17)(B)(iii), a plan is not considered discriminatory merely because the plan provides benefits only for employees who are not eligible to receive benefits under another plan which satisfies the requirements of section 501(c)(17)(A) and which is funded solely by contributions of the employer. In such a case, the plan seeking to qualify under section 501(c)(17) must provide the same benefits, or a portion of such benefits if determined in a nondiscriminatory manner, as are provided for the employees under the plan funded solely by employer contributions. Furthermore, this exception only applies if the employees eligible to receive benefits under both plans would satisfy the requirements in section 501(c)(17)(A)(ii), relating to nondiscrimination as to coverage. The plan of the employer which is being correlated with the plan seeking to satisfy the requirements of section 501(c)(17) may be a plan which forms part of a voluntary employees' beneficiary association described in section 501(c)(9), if such plan satisfies all the requirements of section 501(c)(17)(A). Under this exception, for example, if an employer has established a plan providing for the payment of supplemental unemployment compensation benefits for his hourly wage employees and such plan satisfies the requirements of section 501(c)(17)(A) (even though the plan forms part of a voluntary employees' beneficiary association described in section 501(c)(9)), the salaried employees of such employee may establish a plan for themselves, and, if such plan provides for

the same benefits as the plan covering hourly-wage employees, both plans may be considered as one plan in determining whether the plan covering the salaried employees satisfies the requirement that it be nondiscriminatory as to coverage. The foregoing example would also be applicable if the benefits provided for the salaried employees were funded solely or in part by employer contributions.

(d) *Permanency of the plan.* A plan providing for the payment of supplemental unemployment compensation benefits contemplates a permanent as distinguished from a temporary program. Thus, although there may be reserved the right to change or terminate the plan, and to discontinue contributions thereunder, the abandonment of the plan for any reason other than business necessity within a few years after it has taken effect will be evidence that the plan from its inception was not a bona fide program for the purpose of providing supplemental unemployment compensation benefits to employees. Whether or not a particular plan constitutes a permanent arrangement will be determined by all of the surrounding facts and circumstances. However, merely because a collective bargaining agreement provides that a plan may be modified at the termination of such agreement, or that particular provisions of the plan are subject to renegotiation during the duration of such agreement, does not necessarily imply that the plan is not a permanent arrangement. Moreover, the fact that the plan provides that the assets remaining in the trust after the satisfaction of all liabilities (including contingent liabilities) under the plan may be returned to the employer does not imply that the plan is not a permanent arrangement nor preclude the trust from qualifying under section 501(c)(17).

(e) *Portions of years.* A plan must satisfy the requirements of section 501(c)(17) throughout the entire taxable year of the trust in order for the trust to be exempt for such year. However, section 501(c)(17)(C) provides that a plan will satisfy the nondiscrimination as to classification requirements of section 501(c)(17)(A) if on at least one day in each quarter of the taxable year

of the trust it satisfies such requirements.

(f) *Several trusts constituting one plan.* Several trusts may be designated as constituting part of one plan which is intended to satisfy the requirements of section 501(c)(17), in which case all of such trusts taken as a whole must meet the requirements of such section. The fact that a combination of trusts fails to satisfy the requirements of section 501(c)(17) as one plan does not prevent such of the trusts as satisfy the requirements of section 501(c)(17) from qualifying for exemption under that section.

(g) *Plan of several employers.* A trust forming part of a plan of several employers, or the employees of several employers, will be a supplemental unemployment benefit trust described in section 501(c)(17) if all the requirements of that section are otherwise satisfied.

(h) *Investment of trust funds.* No specific limitations are provided in section 501(c)(17) with respect to investments which may be made by the trustees of a trust qualifying under that section. Generally, the contributions may be used by the trustees to purchase any investments permitted by the trust agreement to the extent allowed by local law. However, the tax-exempt status of the trust will be forfeited if the investments made by the trustees constitute *prohibited transactions* within the meaning of section 503. See section 503 and the regulations thereunder. In addition, such a trust will be subject to tax under section 511 with respect to any *unrelated business taxable income* (as defined in section 512) realized by it from its investments. See sections 511 to 515, inclusive, and the regulations thereunder.

(i) *Allocations.* If a plan which provides sick and accident benefits is financed solely by employer contributions to the trust, and such sick and accident benefits are funded by payment of premiums on an accident or health insurance policy (whether on a group or individual basis) or by contributions to a separate fund which pays such sick and accident benefits, the plan must specify that portion of the contributions to be used to fund such benefits. If a plan which is fi-

nanced in whole or in part by employee contributions provides sick and accident benefits, the plan must specify the portion, if any, of employee contributions allocated to the cost of funding such benefits, and must allocate the cost of funding such benefits between employer contributions and employee contributions.

(j) *Required records and returns.* Every trust described in section 501(c)(17) must maintain records indicating the amount of separation benefits and sick and accident benefits which have been provided to each employee. If a plan is financed, in whole or in part, by employee contributions to the trust, the trust must maintain records indicating the amount of each employee's total contributions allocable to separation benefits. In addition, every trust described in section 501(c)(17) which makes one or more payments totaling \$600 or more in 1 year to an individual must file an annual information return in the manner described in paragraph (b)(1) of §1.6041-2. However, if the payments from such trust are subject to income tax withholding under section 3402(o) and the regulations thereunder, the trust must file, in lieu of such annual information return, the returns of income tax withheld from wages required by section 6011 and the regulations thereunder. In such circumstances, the trust must also furnish the statements to the recipients of trust distributions required by section 6051 and the regulations thereunder.

[T.D. 6972, 33 FR 12901, Sept. 12, 1968, as amended by T.D. 7068, 35 FR 17328, Nov. 11, 1970]

#### § 1.501(c)(17)-3 Relation to other sections of the Code.

(a) *Taxability of benefit distributions—*  
 (1) *Separation benefits.* If the separation benefits described in section 501(c)(17)(D)(i) are funded entirely by employer contributions, then the full amount of any separation benefit payment received by an employee is includible in his gross income under section 61(a). If any such separation benefit is funded by both employer and employee contributions, or solely by employee contributions, the amount of any separation benefit payment which is includible in the gross income of the