

§ 1.1311(a)-2

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

Code, provides certain rules for the correction of the effect of an erroneous treatment of an item in a taxable year which is closed by the statute of limitations or otherwise, in cases where, in connection with the ascertainment of the tax for another taxable year, it has been determined that there was an erroneous treatment of such item in the closed year.

(b) In most situations falling within this part the correction of the effect of the error on a closed year can be made only if either the Commissioner or the taxpayer has taken a position in another taxable year which is inconsistent with the erroneous treatment of the item in the closed year. If a refund or credit would result from the correction of the error in the closed year, then the Commissioner must be the one maintaining the inconsistent position. For example, if the taxpayer erroneously included an item of income on his return for an earlier year which is now closed and the Commissioner successfully requires it to be included in a later year, then the correction of the effect of the erroneous inclusion of that item in the closed year may be made since the Commissioner has maintained a position inconsistent with the treatment of such item in such closed year. On the other hand, if an additional assessment would result from the correction of the error in the closed year, then the taxpayer must be the one maintaining the inconsistent position. For example, if the taxpayer deducted an item in an earlier year which is now closed and he successfully contends that the item should be deducted in a later year, then the correction of the effect of the erroneous deduction of that item in the closed year may be made since the taxpayer has taken a position inconsistent with the treatment of such item in such earlier year.

(c) There are two special circumstances which fall within this part but which do not require that an inconsistent position be maintained. One of these circumstances relates to the inclusion of an item of income in the correct year and the other relates to the allowance of a deduction in the correct year. In the first situation, if the Commissioner takes the position by a defi-

ciency notice or before the Tax Court that an item of income should be included in the gross income of a taxpayer for a particular year and it is ultimately determined that such item was not so includible, then such item can be included in the income of the proper year if that year was not closed at the time the Commissioner took his position. In the second situation, if the taxpayer claims that a deduction should be allowed for a particular year and it is ultimately determined that the deduction was not allowable in that year, then the taxpayer may take the deduction in the proper year if that year was not closed at the time the taxpayer first claimed a deduction.

[T.D. 6500, 25 FR 12031, Nov. 26, 1960]

§ 1.1311(a)-2 Purpose and scope of section 1311.

(a) Section 1311 provides for the correction of the effect of certain errors under circumstances specified in section 1312 when one or more provisions of law, such as the statute of limitations, would otherwise prevent such correction. Section 1311 may be applied to correct the effect of certain errors if, on the date of a determination (as defined in section 1313(a) and the regulations thereunder), correction is prevented by the operation of any provision of law other than sections 1311 through 1315 and section 7122 (relating to compromises) and the corresponding provisions of prior revenue laws. Examples of provisions preventing such corrections are sections 6501, 6511, 6532, and 6901 (c), (d) and (e), relating to periods of limitations; section 6212(c) and 6512 relating to the effect of petition to the Tax Court of the United States on further deficiency letters and on credits or refunds; section 7121 relating to closing agreements; and sections 6401 and 6514 relating to payments, refunds, or credits after the period of limitations has expired. Section 1311 may also be applied to correct the effect of an error if, on the date of the determination, correction of the error is prevented by the operation of any rule of law, such as *res judicata* or *estoppel*.

(b) The determination (including a determination under section 1313 (a)(4)) may be with respect to any of the taxes imposed by subtitle A of the Internal

Revenue Code of 1954, by chapter 1 and subchapters A, B, D, and E of chapter 2 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1939, or by the corresponding provisions of any prior revenue act, or by more than one of such provisions. Section 1311 may be applied to correct the effect of the error only as to the tax or taxes with respect to which the error was made which correspond to the tax or taxes with respect to which the determination relates. Thus, if the determination relates to a tax imposed by chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, the adjustment may be only with respect to the tax imposed by such chapter or by the corresponding provisions of prior law.

(c) Section 1311 is not applicable if, on the date of the determination, correction of the effect of the error is permissible without recourse to said section.

(d) If the tax liability for the year with respect to which the error was made has been compromised under section 7122 or the corresponding provisions of prior revenue laws, no adjustment may be made under section 1311 with respect to said year.

(e) No adjustment may be made under section 1311 for any taxable year beginning prior to January 1, 1932. See section 1314(d).

(f) Section 1311 applies only to a determination (as defined in section 1313(a) and §§1.1313(a)-1 to 1.1313(a)-4, inclusive) made after November 14, 1954. Section 3801 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1939 and the regulations thereunder apply to determinations, as defined therein, made on or before November 14, 1954. See section 1315.

[T.D. 6500, 25 FR 12031, Nov. 26, 1960]

§ 1.1311(b)-1 Maintenance of an inconsistent position.

(a) *In general.* Under the circumstances stated in §1.1312-1, §1.1312-2, paragraph (a) of §1.1312-3, §1.1312-5, §1.1312-6, and §1.1312-7, the maintenance of an inconsistent position is a condition necessary for adjustment. The requirement in such circumstances is that a position maintained with respect to the taxable year of the determination and which is adopted in the determination be inconsistent with the erroneous inclusion, exclusion, omis-

sion, allowance, disallowance, recognition, or nonrecognition, as the case may be, with respect to the taxable year of the error. That is, a position successfully maintained with respect to the taxable year of the determination must be inconsistent with the treatment accorded an item which was the subject of an error in the computation of the tax for the closed taxable year. Adjustments under the circumstances stated in paragraph (b) of §1.1312-3 and in §1.1312-4 are made without regard to the maintenance of an inconsistent position.

(b) *Adjustments resulting in refund or credit.* (1) An adjustment under any of the circumstances stated in §1.1312-1, §1.1312-5, §1.1312-6, or §1.1312-7 which would result in the allowance of a refund or credit is authorized only if (i) the Commissioner, in connection with a determination, has maintained a position which is inconsistent with the erroneous inclusion, omission, disallowance, recognition, or nonrecognition, as the case may be, in the year of the error, and (ii) such inconsistent position is adopted in the determination.

Example: A taxpayer who keeps his books on the cash method erroneously included as income on his return for 1954 an item of accrued interest. After the period of limitations on refunds for 1954 had expired, the district director, on behalf of the Commissioner, proposed an adjustment for the year 1955 on the ground that the item of interest was received in 1955 and, therefore, was properly includible in gross income for that year. The taxpayer and the district director entered into an agreement which meets all of the requirements of §1.1313(a)-4 and which determines that the interest item was includible in gross income for 1955. The Commissioner has maintained a position inconsistent with the inclusion of the interest item for 1954. As the determination (the agreement pursuant to §1.1313(a)-4) adopted such inconsistent position, an adjustment is authorized for the year 1954.

(2) An adjustment under circumstances stated in §1.1312-1, §1.1312-5, §1.1312-6, or §1.1312-7 which would result in the allowance of a refund or credit is not authorized if the taxpayer with respect to whom the determination is made, and not the Commissioner, has maintained such inconsistent position.