

by a welfare benefit fund after December 31, 1985. However, a disqualified benefit, as defined in section 4976(b)(1) or (2), is not subject to section 4976(a) if it is provided from "existing reserves for post-retirement medical or life insurance benefits" that are within the transition rule set forth in section 512(a)(3)(E)(iii) and Q&A-4 of § 1.512(a)-5T (or would be if such transition rule applied to such welfare benefit fund). For example, if a welfare benefit fund in existence on July 18, 1984, provides an individual in whose favor discrimination is prohibited with a post-retirement life insurance benefit after December 31, 1985, that does not meet the requirements of section 505(b) and if the welfare benefit fund received no contributions after July 18, 1984, then the disqualified benefit provided by the fund is not subject to section 4976(a).

(b) A welfare benefit fund will be able to avoid the application of section 4976(b)(1) and (2) if the employer withdraws from such fund, before April 7, 1986, any amounts that are not attributable to "existing reserves for post-retirement medical or life insurance benefits" because they were neither actually set aside nor treated as actually set aside under Q&A-4 of § 1.512(a)-5T, on July 18, 1984. The employer making such a withdrawal must include the amount in income for the first taxable year ending after July 18, 1984, or, to the extent that the withdrawn amount is attributable to the following taxable year, for such following taxable year. Such a withdrawal will not be treated as an impermissible distribution or reversion under section 501(c)(9), and will not be treated as a disqualified benefit under section 4976(b)(3). Of course, to the extent that the welfare benefit fund contains amounts that are attributable to "existing reserves" but are not within the transition rule set forth in Q&A-4 of § 1.512(a)-5T (as applied to welfare benefit funds), for example, because such amounts exceed the amounts that could have been accumulated under the principles set forth in Revenue Rulings 69-382, 1969-2 C.B. 28; 69-478, 1969-2 C.B. 29; and 73-599, 1973-2 C.B. 40, the fund will not be able to avoid the application of section 4976(b)(1) and (2) under this paragraph.

(c) In the case of a plan which is maintained pursuant to one or more collective bargaining agreements (1) between employee representatives and one or more employers and (2) which are in effect on July 1, 1985 (or ratified on or before that date), the provision does not apply to disqualified benefits provided in years beginning before the termination of the last of the collective bargaining agreements pursuant to which the plan is maintained (determined without regard to any extension of the contract agreed to after July 1, 1985). For purposes of the preceding sentence, any plan amendment made pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement relating to the plan which amends the plan solely to conform to any requirement added under section 511 of the Tax Reform Act 1984 (i.e., requirements under sections 419, 419A, 512(a)(3)(E), and 4976) shall not be treated as a termination of such collective bargaining agreement.

[T.D. 8073, 51 FR 4336, Feb. 4, 1986]

§ 54.4977-1T Questions and answers relating to the election concerning lines of business in existence on January 1, 1984 (temporary).

The following questions and answers relate to the election by employers under section 4977 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as added by section 531(e)(1) of the Tax Reform Act of 1984 (98 Stat. 886), to treat all employees of any line of business in existence on January 1, 1984, as employees of one of those lines of business for purposes of section 132(a) (1) and (2):

Q-1: What does section 4977 provide with respect to the exclusion from gross income of certain fringe benefits?

A-1: In general, section 4977 provides an elective grandfather rule that allows an employer under certain circumstances to treat employees of all lines of business which were in existence on January 1, 1984, as employees of one of those lines of business for purposes of section 132(a) (1) and (2), but not for purposes of section 132(g)(2).

Q-2: Under what circumstances does the elective grandfather rule of section 4977 apply?

A-2: If:

(a) An election under section 4977 is in effect with respect to an employer for any calendar year, and

(b) On and after January 1, 1984, at least 85 percent of the employees of the employer in all of its lines of business which existed on January 1, 1984, were entitled to employee discounts or services provided by the employer in one line of business,

then all employees of any line of business of the employer which was in existence on January 1, 1984, are treated, for purposes of section 132(a) (1) and (2) (but not for purposes of section 132(g)(2)) as employees of the one line of business referred to in (b) of this Q/A-2.

Q-3: How does an employer make the election provided for in section 4977?

A-3: An employer must file a statement with the director of the service center with which the employer's tax returns are filed. The statement must indicate that the employer is electing to apply the provisions of section 4977 to one or more of the employer's lines of business and must contain the following information:

(a) The employer's name, address, and taxpayer identification number;

(b) A description of all of the employer's lines of business in existence on January 1, 1984; and

(c) For each lines of business which is to have as an employee for purposes of section 132(a) (1) and (2) an individual but for the election under section 4977 would not be treated as an employee for purposes of section 132(a) (1) and (2):

(1) A description of the no-additional-cost service or qualified employee discount (including, with respect to discounts, the percentage discount) to be offered to employees pursuant to section 4977 in such line of business, and

(2) With respect to employees in all of the employer's lines of business in existence on January 1, 1984, the number of such employees and the number entitled to the described fringe benefit. Such numbers may be determined as of a date which does not precede the date the election is filed by more than 30 days.

Q-4: In order to make a timely section 4977 election, when must an employer file the election statement?

A-4: Except as otherwise provided in the second sentence of this answer, the employer must file the election statement before the end of the calendar year preceding the year for which the election is to apply. For calendar year 1985, however, the employer has until March 31, 1985, to file the election statement. However, the Commissioner may, in his discretion, extend the March 31, 1985 deadline to a later date.

Q-5: Does section 4977 apply to all calendar years following the calendar year in which the election is made?

A-5: Yes, unless the employer revokes the election.

Q-6: When is a revocation effective?

A-6: A revocation is effective with respect to the calendar year following the calendar year in which it is filed.

Q-7: If an employer does not make a timely section 4977 election with respect to 1985, will the employer be entitled to make an election with respect to any subsequent year?

A-7: No.

Q-8: If an employer revokes a section 4977 election, is the employer entitled to elect the application of section 4977 for subsequent years?

A-8: No.

[T.D. 8004, 50 FR 753, Jan. 7, 1985]

§ 54.4978-1T Questions and answers relating to the tax on certain dispositions by employee stock ownership plans and certain cooperatives (temporary).

Q-1: What does section 4978 provide?

A-1: Section 4978 imposes a tax (as determined under section 4978(b) and Q&A-2 of this section) on the amount realized on the disposition of any qualified securities, if:

(a) An employee stock ownership plan or eligible worker-owned cooperative acquires any qualified securities in a sale to which section 1042 applies;

(b) Such plan or cooperative disposes of any qualified securities during the 3-year period after the date on which any qualified securities were acquired in the sale to which section 1042 applies; and

(c) Either (1) the percentage of the total outstanding shares of the class of employer securities of which the disposed qualified securities are a part held by such plan or cooperative after