

whether or not consecutive, completed before such period of severance. The plan may in computing such aggregate number of years of service prior to such break disregard any years of service which could have been disregarded under this subparagraph by reason of any prior break in service.

(ii) *Examples.* The rules of this subparagraph are illustrated by the following example:

Example. In 1980, A, who was hired at age 35, separates from the service of X Corporation after completing 4 years of service. At this time A had no vested benefits. In 1985, after incurring 5 consecutive one-year breaks in service, A was reemployed. Under section 410(a)(5)(D), A's 4 years of service may be disregarded because they are exceeded by the number of years of consecutive one-year breaks (5) after such service.

(d) *Special continuity rule for certain plans.* For special rules for computing years of service in the case of a plan maintained by more than one employer, see regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Labor under 29 CFR Part 2530, relating to minimum standards for employee pension benefit plans.

(Sec. 410 (88 Stat. 898; 26 U.S.C. 410))

[T.D. 7508, 42 FR 47196, Sept. 20, 1977; T.D. 7508, 42 FR 57123, Nov. 1, 1977, as amended by T.D. 7703, 45 FR 40980, June 17, 1980]

§ 1.410(a)-6 Amendment of break in service rules; Transition period.

(a) *In general.* Under section 1017(f) (1) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, a plan is not a qualified plan (and a trust forming a part of such plan is not a qualified trust) if the rules of the plan relating to breaks in service are amended, and—

(1) Such amendment is effective after January 1, 1974, and before the date on which section 410 becomes applicable to the plan, and

(2) Under such amendment, any employee's participation in the plan commences at any date later than the later of—

(i) The date on which his participation would commence under the break in service rules of section 410(a)(5), or

(ii) The earliest date on which his participation would commence under the plan as in effect on or after January 1, 1974.

(b) *Break in service rules.* For purposes of paragraph (a), the term "break in service rules" means the rules provided by a plan relating to circumstances under which a period of an employee's service or plan participation is disregarded for purposes of determining his rights to participate in the plan, if under such rules such service is disregarded by reason of the employee's failure to complete a required period of service within a specified period of time.

(Sec. 410 (88 Stat. 898; 26 U.S.C. 410))

[T.D. 7508, 42 FR 47197, Sept. 20, 1977; 43 FR 2721, Jan. 19, 1978]

§ 1.410(a)-7 Elapsed time.

(a) *In general—(1) Introduction to elapsed time method of crediting service.*

(i) 29 CFR 2530.200b-2 sets forth the general method of crediting service for an employee. The general method is based upon the actual counting of hours of service during the applicable 12-consecutive-month computation period. The equivalencies set forth in 29 CFR 2530.200b-3 are also methods for crediting hours of service during computation periods. Under the general method and the equivalencies an employee receives a year's credit (in units of years of service or years of participation) for a computation period during which the employee is credited with a specified number of hours of service. In general, an employee's statutory entitlement with respect to eligibility to participate, vesting and benefit accrual is determined by totalling the number of years' credit to which an employee is entitled.

(ii) Under the alternative method set forth in this section, by contrast, an employee's statutory entitlement with respect to eligibility to participate, vesting and benefit accrual is not based upon the actual completion of a specified number of hours of service during a 12-consecutive-month period. Instead, such entitlement is determined generally with reference to the total period of time which elapses while the employee is employed (i.e., while the employment relationship exists) with the employer or employers maintaining the plan. The alternative method set forth in this section is designed to