

- (c) Correction amount.
- (d) Correction where contract has been partially performed.
- (e) Correction in the case of an applicable tax-exempt organization that has ceased to exist, or is no longer tax-exempt.
- (1) In general.
- (2) Section 501(c)(3) organizations.
- (3) Section 501(c)(4) organizations.
- (f) Examples.

§ 53.4958-8 *Special rules.*

- (a) Substantive requirements for exemption still apply.
- (b) Interaction between section 4958 and section 7611 rules for church tax inquiries and examinations.
- (c) Other substantiation requirements.

[T.D. 8978, 67 FR 3083, Jan. 23, 2002]

§ 53.4958-1 Taxes on excess benefit transactions.

(a) *In general.* Section 4958 imposes excise taxes on each excess benefit transaction (as defined in section 4958(c) and § 53.4958-4) between an applicable tax-exempt organization (as defined in section 4958(e) and § 53.4958-2) and a disqualified person (as defined in section 4958(f)(1) and § 53.4958-3). A disqualified person who receives an excess benefit from an excess benefit transaction is liable for payment of a section 4958(a)(1) excise tax equal to 25 percent of the excess benefit. If an initial tax is imposed by section 4958(a)(1) on an excess benefit transaction and the transaction is not corrected (as defined in section 4958(f)(6) and § 53.4958-7) within the taxable period (as defined in section 4958(f)(5) and paragraph (c)(2)(ii) of this section), then any disqualified person who received an excess benefit from the excess benefit transaction on which the initial tax was imposed is liable for an additional tax of 200 percent of the excess benefit. An organization manager (as defined in section 4958(f)(2) and paragraph (d) of this section) who participates in an excess benefit transaction, knowing that it was such a transaction, is liable for payment of a section 4958(a)(2) excise tax equal to 10 percent of the excess benefit, unless the participation was not willful and was due to reasonable cause. If an organization manager also receives an excess benefit from an excess benefit transaction, the manager may be liable for both taxes imposed by section 4958(a).

(b) *Excess benefit defined.* An excess benefit is the amount by which the value of the economic benefit provided by an applicable tax-exempt organization directly or indirectly to or for the use of any disqualified person exceeds the value of the consideration (including the performance of services) received for providing such benefit.

(c) *Taxes paid by disqualified person—*
 (1) *Initial tax.* Section 4958(a)(1) imposes a tax equal to 25 percent of the excess benefit on each excess benefit transaction. The section 4958(a)(1) tax shall be paid by any disqualified person who received an excess benefit from that excess benefit transaction. With respect to any excess benefit transaction, if more than one disqualified person is liable for the tax imposed by section 4958(a)(1), all such persons are jointly and severally liable for that tax.

(2) *Additional tax on disqualified person—*(i) *In general.* Section 4958(b) imposes a tax equal to 200 percent of the excess benefit in any case in which section 4958(a)(1) imposes a 25-percent tax on an excess benefit transaction and the transaction is not corrected (as defined in section 4958(f)(6) and § 53.4958-7) within the taxable period (as defined in section 4958(f)(5) and paragraph (c)(2)(ii) of this section). If a disqualified person makes a payment of less than the full correction amount under the rules of § 53.4958-7, the 200-percent tax is imposed only on the unpaid portion of the correction amount (as described in § 53.4958-7(c)). The tax imposed by section 4958(b) is payable by any disqualified person who received an excess benefit from the excess benefit transaction on which the initial tax was imposed by section 4958(a)(1). With respect to any excess benefit transaction, if more than one disqualified person is liable for the tax imposed by section 4958(b), all such persons are jointly and severally liable for that tax.

(ii) *Taxable period.* *Taxable period* means, with respect to any excess benefit transaction, the period beginning with the date on which the transaction occurs and ending on the earlier of—

(A) The date of mailing a notice of deficiency under section 6212 with respect to the section 4958(a)(1) tax; or

(B) The date on which the tax imposed by section 4958(a)(1) is assessed.

(iii) *Abatement if correction during the correction period.* For rules relating to abatement of taxes on excess benefit transactions that are corrected within the correction period, as defined in section 4963(e), see sections 4961(a), 4962(a), and the regulations thereunder. The abatement rules of section 4961 specifically provide for a 90-day correction period after the date of mailing a notice of deficiency under section 6212 with respect to the section 4958(b) 200-percent tax. If the excess benefit is corrected during that correction period, the 200-percent tax imposed shall not be assessed, and if assessed the assessment shall be abated, and if collected shall be credited or refunded as an overpayment. For special rules relating to abatement of the 25-percent tax, see section 4962.

(d) *Tax paid by organization managers—(1) In general.* In any case in which section 4958(a)(1) imposes a tax, section 4958(a)(2) imposes a tax equal to 10 percent of the excess benefit on the participation of any organization manager who knowingly participated in the excess benefit transaction, unless such participation was not willful and was due to reasonable cause. Any organization manager who so participated in the excess benefit transaction must pay the tax.

(2) *Organization manager defined—(i) In general.* An organization manager is, with respect to any applicable tax-exempt organization, any officer, director, or trustee of such organization, or any individual having powers or responsibilities similar to those of officers, directors, or trustees of the organization, regardless of title. A person is an officer of an organization if that person—

(A) Is specifically so designated under the certificate of incorporation, by-laws, or other constitutive documents of the organization; or

(B) Regularly exercises general authority to make administrative or policy decisions on behalf of the organization. A contractor who acts solely in a capacity as an attorney, accountant, or investment manager or advisor, is not an officer. For purposes of this paragraph (d)(2)(i)(B), any person who has

authority merely to recommend particular administrative or policy decisions, but not to implement them without approval of a superior, is not an officer.

(ii) *Special rule for certain committee members.* An individual who is not an officer, director, or trustee, yet serves on a committee of the governing body of an applicable tax-exempt organization (or as a designee of the governing body described in § 53.4958-6(c)(1)) that is attempting to invoke the rebuttable presumption of reasonableness described in § 53.4958-6 based on the committee's (or designee's) actions, is an organization manager for purposes of the tax imposed by section 4958(a)(2).

(3) *Participation.* For purposes of section 4958(a)(2) and this paragraph (d), participation includes silence or inaction on the part of an organization manager where the manager is under a duty to speak or act, as well as any affirmative action by such manager. An organization manager is not considered to have participated in an excess benefit transaction, however, where the manager has opposed the transaction in a manner consistent with the fulfillment of the manager's responsibilities to the applicable tax-exempt organization.

(4) *Knowing—(i) In general.* For purposes of section 4958(a)(2) and this paragraph (d), a manager participates in a transaction knowingly only if the person—

(A) Has actual knowledge of sufficient facts so that, based solely upon those facts, such transaction would be an excess benefit transaction;

(B) Is aware that such a transaction under these circumstances may violate the provisions of Federal tax law governing excess benefit transactions; and

(C) Negligently fails to make reasonable attempts to ascertain whether the transaction is an excess benefit transaction, or the manager is in fact aware that it is such a transaction.

(ii) *Amplification of general rule.* *Knowing* does not mean having reason to know. However, evidence tending to show that a manager has reason to know of a particular fact or particular rule is relevant in determining whether the manager had actual knowledge of such a fact or rule. Thus, for example,

evidence tending to show that a manager has reason to know of sufficient facts so that, based solely upon such facts, a transaction would be an excess benefit transaction is relevant in determining whether the manager has actual knowledge of such facts.

(iii) *Reliance on professional advice.* An organization manager's participation in a transaction is ordinarily not considered knowing within the meaning of section 4958(a)(2), even though the transaction is subsequently held to be an excess benefit transaction, to the extent that, after full disclosure of the factual situation to an appropriate professional, the organization manager relies on a reasoned written opinion of that professional with respect to elements of the transaction within the professional's expertise. For purposes of section 4958(a)(2) and this paragraph (d), a written opinion is reasoned even though it reaches a conclusion that is subsequently determined to be incorrect so long as the opinion addresses itself to the facts and the applicable standards. However, a written opinion is not reasoned if it does nothing more than recite the facts and express a conclusion. The absence of a written opinion of an appropriate professional with respect to a transaction shall not, by itself, however, give rise to any inference that an organization manager participated in the transaction knowingly. For purposes of this paragraph, appropriate professionals on whose written opinion an organization manager may rely, are limited to—

(A) Legal counsel, including in-house counsel;

(B) Certified public accountants or accounting firms with expertise regarding the relevant tax law matters; and

(C) Independent valuation experts who—

(1) Hold themselves out to the public as appraisers or compensation consultants;

(2) Perform the relevant valuations on a regular basis;

(3) Are qualified to make valuations of the type of property or services involved; and

(4) Include in the written opinion a certification that the requirements of paragraphs (d)(4)(iii)(C)(1) through (3) of this section are met.

(iv) *Satisfaction of rebuttable presumption of reasonableness.* An organization manager's participation in a transaction is ordinarily not considered knowing within the meaning of section 4958(a)(2), even though the transaction is subsequently held to be an excess benefit transaction, if the appropriate authorized body has met the requirements of § 53.4958-6(a) with respect to the transaction.

(5) *Willful.* For purposes of section 4958(a)(2) and this paragraph (d), participation by an organization manager is willful if it is voluntary, conscious, and intentional. No motive to avoid the restrictions of the law or the incurrance of any tax is necessary to make the participation willful. However, participation by an organization manager is not willful if the manager does not know that the transaction in which the manager is participating is an excess benefit transaction.

(6) *Due to reasonable cause.* An organization manager's participation is due to reasonable cause if the manager has exercised responsibility on behalf of the organization with ordinary business care and prudence.

(7) *Limits on liability for management.* The maximum aggregate amount of tax collectible under section 4958(a)(2) and this paragraph (d) from organization managers with respect to any one excess benefit transaction is \$10,000.

(8) *Joint and several liability.* In any case where more than one person is liable for a tax imposed by section 4958(a)(2), all such persons shall be jointly and severally liable for the taxes imposed under section 4958(a)(2) with respect to that excess benefit transaction.

(9) *Burden of proof.* For provisions relating to the burden of proof in cases involving the issue of whether an organization manager has knowingly participated in an excess benefit transaction, see section 7454(b) and § 301.7454-2 of this chapter. In these cases, the Commissioner bears the burden of proof.

(e) *Date of occurrence—*(1) *In general.* Except as otherwise provided, an excess benefit transaction occurs on the date on which the disqualified person receives the economic benefit for Federal income tax purposes. When a single

contractual arrangement provides for a series of compensation or other payments to (or for the use of) a disqualified person over the course of the disqualified person's taxable year (or part of a taxable year), any excess benefit transaction with respect to these aggregate payments is deemed to occur on the last day of the taxable year (or if the payments continue for part of the year, the date of the last payment in the series).

(2) *Special rules.* In the case of benefits provided pursuant to a qualified pension, profit-sharing, or stock bonus plan, the transaction occurs on the date the benefit is vested. In the case of a transfer of property that is subject to a substantial risk of forfeiture or in the case of rights to future compensation or property (including benefits under a nonqualified deferred compensation plan), the transaction occurs on the date the property, or the rights to future compensation or property, is not subject to a substantial risk of forfeiture. However, where the disqualified person elects to include an amount in gross income in the taxable year of transfer pursuant to section 83(b), the general rule of paragraph (e)(1) of this section applies to the property with respect to which the section 83(b) election is made. Any excess benefit transaction with respect to benefits under a deferred compensation plan which vest during any taxable year of the disqualified person is deemed to occur on the last day of such taxable year. For the rules governing the timing of the reasonableness determination for deferred, contingent, and certain other noncash compensation, see § 53.4958-4(b)(2).

(3) *Statute of limitations rules.* See sections 6501(e)(3) and (l) and the regulations thereunder for statute of limitations rules as they apply to section 4958 excise taxes.

(f) *Effective date for imposition of taxes—(1) In general.* The section 4958 taxes imposed on excess benefit transactions or on participation in excess benefit transactions apply to transactions occurring on or after September 14, 1995.

(2) *Existing binding contracts.* The section 4958 taxes do not apply to any transaction occurring pursuant to a written contract that was binding on

September 13, 1995, and at all times thereafter before the transaction occurs. A written binding contract that is terminable or subject to cancellation by the applicable tax-exempt organization without the disqualified person's consent (including as the result of a breach of contract by the disqualified person) and without substantial penalty to the organization, is no longer treated as a binding contract as of the earliest date that any such termination or cancellation, if made, would be effective. If a binding written contract is materially changed, it is treated as a new contract entered into as of the date the material change is effective. A material change includes an extension or renewal of the contract (other than an extension or renewal that results from the person contracting with the applicable tax-exempt organization unilaterally exercising an option expressly granted by the contract), or a more than incidental change to any payment under the contract.

[T.D. 8978, 67 FR 3083, Jan. 23, 2002]

§ 53.4958-2 Definition of applicable tax-exempt organization.

(a) *Organizations described in section 501(c)(3) or (4) and exempt from tax under section 501(a)—(1) In general.* An applicable tax-exempt organization is any organization that, without regard to any excess benefit, would be described in section 501(c)(3) or (4) and exempt from tax under section 501(a). An applicable tax-exempt organization also includes any organization that was described in section 501(c)(3) or (4) and was exempt from tax under section 501(a) at any time during a five-year period ending on the date of an excess benefit transaction (the lookback period).

(2) *Exceptions from definition of applicable tax-exempt organization—(i) Private foundation.* A private foundation as defined in section 509(a) is not an applicable tax-exempt organization for section 4958 purposes.

(ii) *Governmental unit or affiliate.* A governmental unit or an affiliate of a governmental unit is not an applicable tax-exempt organization for section 4958 purposes if it is—