

separate account or a common or collective trust maintained by a bank, trust company, or similar institution.

(d) The examination and report of an independent qualified public accountant required by §2520.103-1 for a plan utilizing the method of reporting described in this section need not extend to any information concerning an entity which is reported directly to the Department under paragraph (b) of this section.

(e) A “related group” of employee benefit plans consists of every group of two or more employee benefit plans—

(1) Each of which receives 10 percent or more of its aggregate contributions from the same employer or from members of the same controlled group of corporations (as determined under section 1563(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, without regard to section 1563(a)(4) thereof); or

(2) Each of which is either maintained by, or maintained pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement negotiated by, the same employee organization or affiliated employee organizations. For purposes of this paragraph, an “affiliate” of an employee organization means any person controlling, controlled by, or under common control with such organization, and includes any organization chartered by the same parent body, or governed by the same constitution and bylaws, or having the relation of parent and subordinate.

(f) *Method of filing.* The Form 5500 “Annual Return/Report of Employee Benefit Plan” may be filed electronically or through other media in accordance with the instructions accompanying the form provided the entity described in paragraph (c) of this section maintains an original copy, with all required signatures, as part of its records.

[51 FR 41287, Nov. 13, 1986, as amended at 65 FR 21083, Apr. 19, 2000]

Subpart D—Provisions Applicable to Both Reporting and Disclosure Requirements

(The information collection requirements contained in subpart D were approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 1210-0016)

§ 2520.104-1 General.

The administrator of an employee benefit plan covered by part 1 of title I of the Act must file reports and additional information with the Secretary of Labor, and disclose reports, statements, and documents to plan participants and to beneficiaries receiving benefits from the plan. The regulations contained in this subpart are applicable to both the reporting and disclosure requirements of part 1 of title I of the Act. Regulations concerning only a plan administrator’s duty of reporting to the Secretary of Labor are set forth in subpart E of this part, and those applicable only to the duty of disclosure to participants and beneficiaries are set forth in subpart F of this part.

[41 FR 16962, Apr. 23, 1976]

§§ 2520.104-2—2520.104-3 [Reserved]

§ 2520.104-4 Alternative method of compliance for certain successor pension plans.

(a) *General.* Under the authority of section 110 of the Act, this section sets forth an alternative method of compliance for certain successor pension plans in which some participants and beneficiaries not only have their rights set out in the plan, but also retain eligibility for certain benefits under the terms of a former plan which has been merged into the successor. This section is applicable only to plan mergers which occur after the issuance by the successor plan of the initial summary plan description under the Act. Under the alternative method, the plan administrator of the successor plan is not required to describe relevant provisions of merged plans in summary plan descriptions of the successor plan furnished after the merger to that class of participants and beneficiaries still affected by the terms of the merged plans.

(b) *Scope and application.* This alternative method of compliance is available only if:

(1) The plan administrator of the successor plan furnishes to the participants covered under the predecessor plan and beneficiaries receiving pension benefits under the merged plan within 90 days after the effective date of the merger:

(i) A copy of the most recent summary plan description of the successor plan;

(ii) A copy of any summaries of material modifications to the successor plan not incorporated in the most recent summary plan description; and

(iii) A separate statement containing a brief description of the merger, a description of the provisions of, and benefits provided by, the merged and successor plans which are applicable to the participants and beneficiaries of the merged plan; and a notice that copies of the merged and successor plan documents, as well as the plan merger documents (including the portions of any corporate merger documents which describe or control the plan merger), are available for inspection and that copies may be obtained upon written request for a duplication charge (pursuant to § 2520.104b-30); and

(2) After the merger, the plan administrator, in all subsequent summary plan descriptions furnished pursuant to § 2520.104b-2(a)—

(i) Clearly and conspicuously identifies the class of participants and beneficiaries affected by the provisions of the merged plan, and

(ii) States that the documents described in paragraph (b)(1) of this section are available for inspection and that copies may be obtained upon written request for a duplication charge (pursuant to § 2520.104b-30).

[42 FR 37182, July 19, 1977, as amended at 67 FR 776, Jan. 7, 2002]

§§ 2520.104-5—2520.104-6 [Reserved]

§ 2520.104-20 Limited exemption for certain small welfare plans.

(a) *Scope.* Under the authority of section 104(a)(3) of the Act, the administrator of any employee welfare benefit plan which covers fewer than 100 participants at the beginning of the plan year and which meets the requirements of paragraph (b) of this section is exempted from certain reporting and disclosure provisions of the Act. Specifically, the administrator of such plan is not required to file with the Secretary an annual or terminal report. In addition, the administrator of a plan exempted under this section—

(1) Is not required to furnish participants covered under the plan and beneficiaries receiving benefits under the plan with statements of the plan's assets and liabilities and receipts and disbursements and a summary of the annual report required by section 104(b)(3) of the Act;

(2) Is not required to furnish upon written request of any participant or beneficiary a copy of the annual report and any terminal report, as required by section 104(b)(4) of the Act;

(3) Is not required to make copies of the annual report available for examination by any participant or beneficiary in the principal office of the administrator and such other places as may be necessary, as required by section 104(b)(2) of the Act.

(b) *Application.* This exemption applies only to welfare benefit plans—

(1) Which have fewer than 100 participants at the beginning of the plan year;

(2)(i) For which benefits are paid as needed solely from the general assets of the employer or employee organization maintaining the plan, or

(ii) The benefits of which are provided exclusively through insurance contracts or policies issued by an insurance company or similar organization which is qualified to do business in any State or through a qualified health maintenance organization as defined in section 1310(d) of the Public Health Service Act, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 300e-9(d), the premiums for which are paid directly by the employer or employee organization from its general assets or partly from its general assets and partly from contributions by its employees or members, *Provided*, That contributions by participants are forwarded by the employer or employee organization within three months of receipt, or

(iii) Both; and

(3) For which, in the case of an insured plan—

(i) Refunds, to which contributing participants are entitled, are returned to them within three months of receipt by the employer or employee organization, and

(ii) Contributing participants are informed upon entry into the plan of the provisions of the plan concerning the allocation of refunds.