

§ 301.6104(a)-3

26 CFR Ch. I (4-1-10 Edition)

a request for approval of a master, prototype, pattern or other such plan or account.

(4) *Prescribed forms and application letters.* With respect to an application for a determination letter described in this paragraph (b) for which an application form is prescribed, the application for a determination letter includes the form and all documents and statements required to be filed in connection with the form. With respect to an application for a determination letter for which no application form is prescribed, the application for a determination letter includes the application letter and all documents and statements the Internal Revenue Service requires to be submitted with the application letter.

(c) *Documents not constituting an “application for a determination letter”.* The following are not applications for a determination letter for purposes of this section:

(1) An incomplete application that is returned without action for proper completion,

(2) An application that is returned without action to the applicant for failure to notify all interested parties in accordance with the regulations under section 7476 (relating to declaratory judgments), and

(3) A request for a ruling as to whether a proposed transaction is a prohibited transaction under section 4975.

(d) *Supporting documents.* “Supporting documents”, as used with respect to an application for a determination letter which is open to public inspection under this section, means any statement or document submitted in support of the application which is not specifically required by the application form or the Internal Revenue Service. For example, a legal brief submitted in support of an application for a determination letter is a supporting document.

(e) *Applicant.* For purposes of this section, §301.6104(a)-3 (relating to Internal Revenue Service letters and documents open to public inspection) and §301.6104(a)-5 (relating to the withholding of certain information from public inspection), an “applicant” includes, but is not limited to, an employer, plan administrator (as defined

in section 414(g)), labor union, bank, or insurance company that files an application for a determination letter.

(Secs. 6104(a)(1)(A), 6104(a)(1)(B), and 7805 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (72 Stat. 1660, 88 Stat. 940, 68A Stat. 917; 26 U.S.C. 6104(a)(1)(A), 6104(a)(1)(B), 7805))

[T.D. 7845, 47 FR 50487, Nov. 8, 1982]

§ 301.6104(a)-3 Public inspection of Internal Revenue Service letters and documents relating to pension and other plans.

(a) *In general.* Except as provided in §301.6104(a)-4 with respect to plans having fewer than 26 participants, a letter or other document issued by the Internal Revenue Service after September 2, 1974, is open to public inspection under section 6104(a)(1)(B)(iv) and this section, if it is issued with respect to—

(1) The qualification of a pension, profit-sharing or stock bonus plan under section 401(a), an annuity plan under section 403(a), a bond purchase plan under section 405(a), or an individual retirement account or annuity described in section 408 (a), (b) or (c),

(2) The exemption from tax under section 501(a) of an organization forming part of such a plan or account, or a custodial account described in section 401(f), or

(3) The approval of a master, prototype, pattern or other such plan or account.

(b) *Scope.* Internal Revenue Service letters and documents open to public inspection under section 6104(a)(1)(B)(iv) and this section are not limited to those issued in response to an application for a determination letter described in §301.6104(a)-2. They are, however, limited to those issued by the Internal Revenue Service to the person or organization which either did or could file an application for a determination letter for the plan, account or annuity to which the letter or document relates. If such a person or organization designates a representative having a power of attorney, however, then the letter or document will be open to inspection if issued to the representative. For rules relating to when a letter or document is issued, see §301.6110-2(h). Internal Revenue Service letters and documents are open to public inspection under section

6104(a)(1)(B)(iv) and this section whether or not the Internal Revenue Service determines that the plan, account or annuity to which the letter or document relates is qualified or that any related trust or custodial account is exempt from tax.

(c) *Letters and documents open to public inspection.* Internal Revenue Service letters and documents open to public inspection under section 6104(a)(1)(B)(iv) and this section include, but are not limited to:

(1) Determination letters relating to the qualification of a plan, account or annuity described in paragraph (a)(1) of this section (see § 601.201 (o)),

(2) Technical advice memoranda (see § 601.201(n)(9)) relating to the issuance of such determination letters,

(3) Technical advice memoranda relating to the continuing qualification of a plan, account or annuity previously determined to be qualified, or to the qualification of a plan, account or annuity for which no determination letter has been issued,

(4) Letters or documents revoking or modifying any prior favorable determination letter or denying the qualification of a plan, account or annuity for which no determination letter has been issued,

(5) Determination letters relating to the exemption from tax of a trust or custodial account described in paragraph (a)(2) of this section (see § 601.201 (o)(2)(i)(b)), or

(6) Opinion letters relating to the acceptability of the form of any master, prototype or other such plan or account (see § 601.201 (p) and (q)) or notification letters issued with respect to pattern plans.

(d) *Extent letter or document open to public inspection.* A letter or document issued by the Internal Revenue Service is open to public inspection under section 6104(a)(1)(B)(iv) and this section only to the extent it relates directly to the qualification of a plan, account or annuity, the exemption from tax of a related organization or custodial account, or the approval of a master, prototype, pattern or other such plan. Any part of the letter or document which does not directly relate to such a qualification, exemption or approval is not open to public inspection. For example,

a letter to an employer which concludes that an employee's plan is not qualified and the related trust is not tax exempt will be open to public inspection. However, that same letter may also assert an income tax deficiency because employer contributions to the trust are, therefore, not deductible. In such a case, that part of the letter relating to the tax deficiency will be deleted before the letter is opened to public inspection.

(e) *Letters or documents issued with respect to tax return examination.* In the case of an examination of a taxpayer's return or consideration of a taxpayer's claim for credit or refund, no letter or document issued to the taxpayer before the preliminary or "30-day" letter described in § 601.105(d)(1) is issued to the taxpayer will be open to public inspection under section 6104(a)(1)(B)(iv) and this section. The "30-day" letter and any statutory notice of deficiency subsequently issued to the taxpayer under section 6212 will be open to public inspection to the extent provided in paragraph (d) of this section. If any letter or document other than a statutory notice of deficiency is issued to the taxpayer after the "30-day" letter is issued, such letter or document will be open to inspection to the extent provided in paragraph (d) of this section only if it finally resolves or otherwise disposes of a plan qualification or tax exemption issue raised in the "30-day" letter.

(f) *Letters or documents issued after September 2, 1974.* Section 6104(a)(1)(B)(iv) and this section apply to letters or documents issued by the Internal Revenue Service after September 2, 1974, even though the relevant application for a determination letter or other initiating correspondence from the applicant was filed with the Internal Revenue Service before September 2, 1974.

(Secs. 6104(a)(1)(A), 6104(a)(1)(B), and 7805 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (72 Stat. 1660, 88 Stat. 940, 68A Stat. 917; 26 U.S.C. 6104(a)(1)(A), 6104(a)(1)(B), 7805))

[47 FR 7845, 47 FR 50487, Nov. 8, 1982]

§ 301.6104(a)-4 Requirement for 26 or more plan participants.

(a) *Inspection by plan participants.* In the case of a plan, annuity or account