

§ 1.456-5 Definitions and other rules.

(a) *Prepaid dues income.* (1) The term “prepaid dues income” means any amount for membership dues includible in gross income which is received by a membership organization in connection with, and is directly attributable to, a liability of the taxpayer to render services or make available membership privileges over a period of time which extends beyond the close of the taxable year in which such amount is received.

(2) For purposes of section 456, prepaid dues income does not include amounts received by a taxpayer in connection with sales of memberships on a prepaid basis where the taxpayer does not have the liability to furnish the services or make available the membership privileges. For example, where a taxpayer has a contract with several membership organizations to sell memberships in such organizations and retains a portion of the amounts received from the sale of such memberships and remits the balance to the membership organizations, the amounts retained by such taxpayer represent commissions and do not constitute prepaid dues income for purposes of section 456.

(b) *Liability.* The term “liability” means a liability of the taxpayer to render services or make available membership privileges over a period of time which does not exceed 36 months. Thus, if during the taxable year a taxpayer sells memberships for more than 36 months and also memberships for 36 months or less, section 456 does not apply to the income from the sale of memberships for more than 36 months. For the purpose of determining the duration of a liability, a bona fide renewal of a membership shall not be considered to be a part of the existing membership.

(c) *Membership organization.* (1) The term “membership organization” means a corporation, association, federation, or other similar organization meeting the following requirements:

(i) It is organized without capital stock of any kind.

(ii) Its charter, bylaws, or other written agreement or contract expressly prohibits the distribution of any part of the net earnings directly or indirectly, in money, property, or services, to any member, and

(iii) No part of the net earnings of which is in fact distributed to any member either directly or indirectly, in money, property, or services.

(2) For purposes of this paragraph an increase in services or reduction in dues to all members shall generally not be considered distributions of net earnings.

(3) If a corporation, association, federation, or other similar organization subsequent to the time it elects to report its prepaid dues income in accordance with the provisions of section 456, (i) issues any kind of capital stock either to any member or nonmember, (ii) amends its charter, bylaws, or other written agreement or contract to permit distributions of its net earnings to any member or, (iii) in fact, distributes any part of its net earnings either in money, property, or services to any member, then immediately after such event the organization shall not be considered a membership organization within the meaning of section 456(e)(3).

(d) *Receipt of prepaid dues income.* For purposes of section 456, prepaid dues income shall be treated as received during the taxable year for which it is includible in gross income under section 451, relating to the general rule for taxable year of inclusion, without regard to section 456.

[T.D. 6937, 32 FR 16395, Nov. 30, 1967]

§ 1.456-6 Time and manner of making election.

(a) *Election without consent.* A taxpayer may make an election under section 456 without the consent of the Commissioner for the first taxable year beginning after December 31, 1960, in which it receives prepaid dues income in the trade or business for which such election is made. The election must be made not later than the time prescribed by law for filing the income tax return for such year (including extensions thereof). The election must be made by means of a statement attached to such return. In addition, there should be attached a copy of a typical membership contract used by the organization and a copy of its charter, bylaws, or other written agreement or contract of organization or association. The statement shall indicate that the taxpayer is electing to apply

the provisions of section 456 to the trade or business, and shall contain the following information:

(1) The taxpayer's name and a description of the trade or business to which the election is to apply.

(2) The method of accounting used for prepaid dues income in the trade or business during the first taxable year for which the election is to be effective and during each of 3 preceding taxable years, and if there was a change in the method of accounting for prepaid dues income during such 3-year period, a detailed explanation of such change including the adjustments necessary to prevent duplications or omissions of income.

(3) Whether any type of deferral method for prepaid dues income has been used during any of the 3 taxable years preceding the first taxable year for which the election is effective. Where any type of such deferral method has been used during this period, an explanation of the method and a schedule showing the amounts received in each such year and the amounts deferred to each succeeding year.

(4) A schedule with appropriate explanations showing:

(i) The total amount of prepaid dues income received in the trade or business in the first taxable year for which the election is effective and the amount of such income to be included in each taxable year in accordance with the election,

(ii) The total amount, if any, of prepayments of dues received in the first taxable year for which the election is effective which are directly attributable to a liability of the taxpayer to render services or make available membership privileges over a period of time in excess of 36 months, and

(iii) The total amount, if any, of prepaid dues income received in the trade or business in—

(a) The taxable year preceding the first taxable year for which the election is effective if all memberships sold by the taxpayer are for periods of 1 year or less,

(b) Each of the 2 taxable years preceding the first taxable year for which the election is effective if any memberships are sold for periods in excess of 1

year but none are sold for periods in excess of 2 years, or

(c) Each of the 3 taxable years preceding the first taxable year for which the election is effective if any memberships are sold for periods in excess of 2 years.

In each case there shall be set forth the amount of such income which would have been includible in each taxable year had the election been effective for the years for which the information is required.

In any case in which prepaid dues income is received from more than one trade or business, the statement shall set forth separately the required information with respect to each trade or business for which the election is made. See paragraph (c) of this section for additional information required to be submitted with the statement if the taxpayer also elects to include in gross income for the taxable year of receipt the entire amount of prepaid dues income attributable to a liability which is to end within 12 months after the date of receipt.

(b) *Election with consent.* A taxpayer may elect with the consent of the Commissioner, to apply the provisions of section 456 to any trade or business in which it receives prepaid dues income. The request for such consent shall be in writing, signed by the taxpayer or its authorized representative, and shall be addressed to the Commissioner of Internal Revenue, Washington, D.C. 20224. The request must be filed on or before the later of the following dates:

(1) 90 days after the beginning of the first taxable year to which the election is to apply, or

(2) February 28, 1968 and should contain the information described in paragraph (a) of this section.

See paragraph (c) of this section for additional information required to be submitted with the request if the taxpayer also elects to include in gross income for the taxable year of receipt the entire amount of prepaid dues income attributable to a liability which is to end within 12 months after the date of receipt.

(c) *“Within 12 months” election.* (1) The “within 12 months” election shall be made by including in the statement

required by paragraph (a) of this section or the request described in paragraph (b) of this section, whichever is applicable, a declaration that the taxpayer elects to include such income in gross income in the taxable year of receipt, and the amount of such income for each taxable year to which the election is to apply which has ended prior to the time such statement or request is filed. If the taxpayer is engaged in more than one trade or business for which the election under section 456 is made, it must include, in such statement or request, a declaration for each trade or business for which it wishes to make the "within 12 months" election.

(2) If the taxpayer does not make the "within 12 months" election for a trade or business at the time it makes the election under paragraph (a) or (b) of this section, but later wishes to make such election, it must apply for permission from the Commissioner. Such application shall be made in accordance with the provisions of section 446(e).

[T.D. 6937, 32 FR 16395, Nov. 30, 1967; 32 FR 17479, Dec. 6, 1967]

§ 1.456-7 Transitional rule.

(a) Under section 456(d)(1), a taxpayer making an election under section 456 shall include in its gross income for the first taxable year to which the election applies and for each of the 2 succeeding taxable years not only that portion of prepaid dues income which is includible in gross income for each such taxable year under section 456(a), but also an additional amount equal to that portion of the total prepaid dues income received in each of the 3 taxable years preceding the first taxable year to which the election applies which would have been includible in gross income for such first taxable year and such 2 succeeding taxable years had the election under section 456 been effective during such 3 preceding taxable years. In computing such additional amounts—

(1) In the case of taxpayers who did not include in gross income for the taxable year preceding the first taxable year for which the election is effective, that portion of the prepaid dues income received in such year attributable to a liability which is to end within 12 months after the date of receipt, no ef-

fect shall be given to a "within 12 months" election made under paragraph (c) of § 1.456-6, and

(2) There shall be taken into account only prepaid dues income arising from a trade or business with respect to which an election is made under section 456 and § 1.456-6.

Section 481 and the regulations thereunder shall have no application to the additional amounts includible in gross income under section 456(d) and this section, but section 481 and the regulations thereunder shall apply to prevent other amounts from being duplicated or omitted.

(b) A taxpayer who makes an election with respect to prepaid dues income, and who includes in gross income for any taxable year to which the election applies an additional amount computed under section 456(d)(1) and paragraph (a) of this section, shall be permitted under section 456(d)(2) to deduct for such taxable year and for each of the 4 succeeding taxable years an amount equal to one-fifth of such additional amount, but only to the extent that such additional amount was also included in the taxpayer's gross income for any of the 3 taxable years preceding the first taxable year to which such election applies. The taxpayer shall maintain books and records in sufficient detail to enable the district director to determine upon audit that the additional amounts were included in the taxpayer's gross income for any of the 3 taxable years preceding such first taxable year. If, however, the taxpayer ceases to exist, as described in paragraph (b) of § 1.456-4, and there is included in gross income, under such paragraph, of the year of cessation the entire portion of prepaid dues income not previously includible in gross income under section 456 for preceding taxable years (other than for amounts received prior to the first year for which an election was made), all the amounts not previously deducted under this paragraph shall be permitted as a deduction in the year of cessation of existence.

(c) The provisions of this section may be illustrated by the following example:

Example. (1) Assume that X Corporation, a membership organization qualified to make