Internal Revenue Service, Treasury

§ 1.451-1

General rule for taxable year of inclusion.

(a) General rule. Gains, profits, and income are to be included in gross income for the taxable year in which they are actually or constructively received by the taxpayer unless includible for a different year in accordance with the taxpayer’s method of accounting. Under an accrual method of accounting, income is includible in gross income when all the events have occurred which fix the right to receive such income and the amount thereof can be determined with reasonable accuracy. Therefore, under such a method of accounting if, in the case of compensation for services, no determination can be made as to the right to such compensation or the amount thereof until the services are completed, the amount of compensation is ordinarily income for the taxable year in which the determination can be made. Under the cash receipts and disbursements method of accounting, such an amount is includible in gross income when actually or constructively received. Where an amount of income is properly accrued on the basis of a reasonable estimate and the exact amount is subsequently determined, the difference, if any, shall be taken into account for the taxable year in which such determination is made. To the extent that income is attributable to the recovery of bad debts for accounts charged off in prior years, it is includible in the year of recovery in accordance with the taxpayer’s method of accounting, regardless of the date when the amounts were charged off. For treatment of bad debts and bad debt recoveries, see sections 166 and 111 and the regulations thereunder. For rules relating to the treatment of amounts received in crop shares, see section 61 and the regulations thereunder. For the year in which a partner must include his distributive share of partnership income, see section 706(a) and paragraph (a) of §1.706-1. If a taxpayerascertains that an item should have been included in gross income in a prior taxable year, he should, if within the period of limitation, file an amended return and pay any additional tax due. Similarly, if a taxpayerascertains that an item was improperly included in gross income in a prior taxable year, he should, if within the period of limitation, file claim for credit or refund of any overpayment of tax arising therefrom.

(b) Special rule in case of death. (1) A taxpayer’s taxable year ends on the date of his death. See section 443(a)(2) and paragraph (a)(2) of §1.443-1. In computing taxable income for such year, there shall be included only amounts

Example 4. In 2007, F collects in full an account receivable of $1,700 that was outstanding at the end of 2006. Under paragraph (d)(5) of this section, F must recognize additional gross income in 2007 equal to the portion of this receivable of $1,700 that was outstanding at the end of 2006. Under paragraph (d)(5) of this section, F may continue to use its alternative nonaccrual-experience method, subject to the three-year self-test requirement.

Example 12. Subsequent worthlessness of year-end receivable. The facts are the same as in Example 4, except that one of the accounts receivable outstanding at the end of 2002 was for $8,000, and in 2003, under section 166, the entire amount of this receivable becomes wholly worthless. Because F does not accrue as income $1,573 of this account receivable ($8,000×.1967) under the nonaccrual-experience method in 2002, under paragraph (d)(2) of this section F may not deduct this portion of the account receivable as a bad debt deduction under section 166 in 2003. F may deduct the remaining balance of the receivable in 2003 as a bad debt deduction under section 166 ($8,000−$1,573−$6,426).

Example 13. Subsequent collection of year-end receivable. The facts are the same as in Example 4. In 2007, F collects in full an account receivable of $1,700 that was outstanding at the end of 2006. Under paragraph (d)(5) of this section, F must recognize additional gross income in 2007 equal to the portion of this receivable of $1,700 that F excluded from gross income in the prior taxable year ($1,700×.1967=$334). That amount ($334) is a recovery under paragraph (d)(5) of this section.

Special rule in case of death.

(1) A
§ 1.451–2

Constructive receipt of income.

(a) General rule. Income although not actually reduced to a taxpayer's possession is constructively received by him in the taxable year during which it is credited to his account, set apart for him, or otherwise made available so that he may draw upon it at any time, or so that he could have drawn upon it during the taxable year if notice of intention to withdraw had been given. However, income is not constructively received if the taxpayer's control of its receipt is subject to substantial limitations or restrictions. Thus, if a corporation credits its employees with bonus stock, but the stock is not available to such employees until some future date, the mere crediting on the books of the corporation does not constitute receipt. In the case of interest, dividends, or other earnings (whether or not credited) payable in respect of any deposit or account in a bank, building and loan association, savings and loan association, or similar institution, the following are not substantial limitations or restrictions on the taxpayer's control over the receipt of such earnings:

(1) A requirement that the deposit or account, and the earnings thereon, must be withdrawn in multiples of even amounts;

(2) The fact that the taxpayer would, by withdrawing the earnings during the taxable year, receive earnings that are not substantially less in comparison with the earnings for the corresponding period to which the taxpayer would be entitled had he left the account on deposit until a later date (for example, if an amount equal to

(f) Timing of income from notional principal contracts. For the timing of income with respect to notional principal contracts, see §1.446–3.

(g) Timing of income from section 467 rental agreements. For the timing of income with respect to section 467 rental agreements, see section 467 and the regulations thereunder.

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