

Social Security Administration

§ 404.1047

(ii) Were offered or furnished by the employer merely as a means of promoting the health, good will, contentment, or efficiency of the employees.

(2) The term *facilities or privileges* for the period prior to January 1, 1985 is intended to include such items as entertainment, medical services, and so-called *courtesy* discounts on purchases.

(b) *Meals and lodging.* The value of the meals and lodging furnished to an employee by an employer for reasons of the employer's convenience is not wages if—

(1) The meals are provided at the employer's place of business; and

(2) The employee, in the case of lodging, is required to accept lodging on the employer's business premises as a condition of employment.

[52 FR 29662, Aug. 11, 1987]

§ 404.1044 Vacation pay.

We consider your salary while on vacation, or a *vacation allowance* paid by your employer, to be wages.

§ 404.1045 Employee expenses.

Amounts that your employer pays you specifically—either as advances or reimbursements—for traveling or for other ordinary and necessary expenses incurred, or reasonably expected to be incurred, in your employer's business are not wages. The employer must identify these travel and other expenses either by making a separate payment or by specifically stating the separate amounts if both wages and expense allowances are combined in a single payment.

§ 404.1046 Pay for work by certain members of religious orders.

(a) If you are a member of a religious order who has taken a vow of poverty (§ 404.1023), and the order has elected Social Security coverage under section 3121(r) of the Code, your wages are figured in a special way. Your wages, for Social Security purposes, are the fair market value of any board, lodging, clothing, and other items of value furnished to you by the order, or furnished to the order on your behalf by another organization or person under an agreement with the order. See paragraph (b) of this section if you perform services for a third party. The order must re-

port at least \$100 a month for each active member. If the fair market value of items furnished to all members of a religious order does not vary significantly, the order may consider all members to have a uniform wage.

(b) If you perform services for a third party, the following rules apply:

(1) If you perform services for another agency of the supervising church or an associated institution, any amounts paid based on such services, whether paid directly to you or to the order, do not count on wages. Only wages figured under (a) above, are counted.

(2) If you perform services in a secular setting as an employee of a third party not affiliated or associated with the supervising church or an associated institution, any amounts paid based on such services, whether paid directly to you or to the order, count as wages paid to you by the third party. These wages are in addition to any wages counted under paragraph (a) of this section.

[55 FR 7309, Mar. 1, 1990; 55 FR 17530, Apr. 25, 1990]

§ 404.1047 Annual wage limitation.

Payments made by an employer to you as an employee in a calendar year that are more than the annual wage limitation are not wages. The annual wage limitation is:

| Calendar year | Wage limitation |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1951-54 | \$3,600 |
| 1955-58 | 4,200 |
| 1959-65 | 4,800 |
| 1966-67 | 6,600 |
| 1968-71 | 7,800 |
| 1972 | 9,000 |
| 1973 | 10,800 |
| 1974 | 13,200 |
| 1975 | 14,100 |
| 1976 | 15,300 |
| 1977 | 16,500 |
| 1978 | 17,700 |
| 1979 | 22,900 |
| 1980 | 25,900 |
| 1981 | 29,700 |
| 1982 | 32,400 |
| 1983 | 35,700 |
| 1984 | 37,800 |
| 1985 | 39,600 |
| 1986 | 42,000 |
| 1987 | 43,800 |
| 1988 | 45,000 |
| 1989 | 48,000 |
| 1990 | 51,300 |
| 1991 | 53,400 |

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| Calendar year | Wage limitation |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1992 | 55,500 |

[52 FR 8249, Mar. 17, 1987, as amended at 57 FR 44098, Sept. 24, 1992]

§ 404.1048 Contribution and benefit base after 1992.

(a) *General.* The contribution and benefit base after 1992 is figured under the formula described in paragraph (b) of this section in any calendar year in which there is an automatic cost-of-living increase in old-age, survivors, and disability insurance benefits. For purposes of this section, the calendar year in which the contribution and benefit base is figured is called the determination year. The base figured in the determination year applies to wages paid after (and taxable years beginning after) the determination year.

(b) *Formula for figuring the contribution and benefit base.* For wages paid after (and taxable years beginning after) the determination year, the contribution and benefit base is the larger of—

(1) The contribution and benefit base in effect for the determination year; or

(2) The amount determined by—

(i) Multiplying the contribution and benefit base in effect for the determination year by the ratio of—

(A) The average of the total wages (as described in paragraph (c) of this section) reported to the Secretary of the Treasury for the calendar year before the determination year to

(B) The average of the total wages reported to the Secretary of the Treasury for the calendar year before the most recent calendar year in which an increase in the contribution and benefit base was enacted or a determination under this section resulting in an increase of the base was made; and

(ii) Rounding the result of the multiplication, if not a multiple of \$300, to—

(A) The nearest multiple of \$300; or

(B) The next higher multiple of \$300 if the result is a multiple of \$150.

(c) *Average of the total wages.* The average of the total wages means the amount equal to all remuneration reported as wages on Form W-2 to the Internal Revenue Service for all employ-

ees for income tax purposes plus contributions to certain deferred compensation plans described in section 209(k) of the Social Security Act (also reported on Form W-2), divided by the number of wage earners. If both distributions from and contributions to any such deferred compensation plan are reported on Form W-2, we will include only the contributions in the calculation of the average of the total wages. The reported remuneration and deferred compensation contributions include earnings from work not covered under social security and earnings from work covered under social security that are more than the annual wage limitation described in § 404.1047.

[45 FR 20075, Mar. 27, 1980, as amended at 55 FR 7309, Mar. 1, 1990; 57 FR 1382, Jan. 14, 1992]

§ 404.1049 Payments under an employer plan or system.

(a) Payments to, or on behalf of, you or any of your dependents under your employer's plan or system are excluded from wages if made because of your or your dependents'—

(1) Medical or hospitalization expenses connected with sickness or accident disability; or

(2) Death, except that the exclusion does not apply to payments for group-term life insurance to the extent that the payments are includible in the gross income of the employee under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, effective with respect to group-term life insurance coverage in effect after 1987 for employees whose employment, for the employer (or successor of that employer) providing the insurance coverage, does not end prior to 1989. Such payments are wages, however, if they are for coverage for an employee who was separated from employment prior to January 1, 1989, if the payments are for any period for which the employee is reemployed by the employer (or successor of that employer) after the date of separation.

(b) Payments to you or your dependents under your employer's plan at or after the termination of your employment relationship because of your death or retirement for disability are excluded from wages.