

(ii) an increase in a benefit, or in the rate of future benefit accruals, shall be considered a benefit restoration to the extent that the benefit, or the accrual rate, is not thereby increased above the highest benefit level, or accrual rate, which was in effect under the terms of the plan immediately before the effective date of the amendment reducing accrued benefits.

(2) If a plan is amended to partially restore previously reduced accrued benefit levels, or the rate of future benefit accruals, the benefits of inactive participants shall be restored in at least the same proportions as other accrued benefits which are restored.

(3) No benefit increase under a plan may take effect in a plan year in which an amendment reducing accrued benefits under the plan, in accordance with this section, is adopted or first becomes effective.

(4) A plan is not required to make retroactive benefit payments with respect to that portion of an accrued benefit which was reduced and subsequently restored under this section.

(e) “Inactive participant” defined

For purposes of this section, “inactive participant” means a person not in covered service under the plan who is in pay status under the plan or who has a nonforfeitable benefit under the plan.

(f) Promulgation of rules; contents, etc.

The Secretary of the Treasury may prescribe rules under which, notwithstanding any other provision of this section, accrued benefit reductions or benefit increases for different participant groups may be varied equitably to reflect variations in contribution rates and other relevant factors reflecting differences in negotiated levels of financial support for plan benefit obligations.

(Pub. L. 93-406, title IV, § 4244A, as added Pub. L. 96-364, title I, § 104(2), Sept. 26, 1980, 94 Stat. 1257; amended Pub. L. 101-239, title VII, § 7891(a)(1), Dec. 19, 1989, 103 Stat. 2445.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

Section 412, referred to in subsec. (a)(2), was amended generally by Pub. L. 109-280, title I, § 111(a), Aug. 17, 2006, 120 Stat. 820, and as so amended, no longer contains a subsec. (c)(8) or (10).

AMENDMENTS

1989—Subsec. (a)(2). Pub. L. 101-239 substituted “Internal Revenue Code of 1986” for “Internal Revenue Code of 1954”, which for purposes of codification was translated as “title 26” thus requiring no change in text.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1989 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 101-239 effective, except as otherwise provided, as if included in the provision of the Tax Reform Act of 1986, Pub. L. 99-514, to which such amendment relates, see section 7891(f) of Pub. L. 101-239, set out as a note under section 1002 of this title.

§ 1426. Insolvent plans

(a) Suspension of payments of benefits; conditions, amount, etc.

Notwithstanding sections 1053 and 1054 of this title, in any case in which benefit payments

under an insolvent multiemployer plan exceed the resource benefit level, any such payments of benefits which are not basic benefits shall be suspended, in accordance with this section, to the extent necessary to reduce the sum of such payments and the payments of such basic benefits to the greater of the resource benefit level or the level of basic benefits, unless an alternative procedure is prescribed by the corporation under section 1322a(g)(5) of this title.

(b) Determination of insolvency status for plan year; definitions

For purposes of this section, for a plan year—

(1) a multiemployer plan is insolvent if the plan’s available resources are not sufficient to pay benefits under the plan when due for the plan year, or if the plan is determined to be insolvent under subsection (d) of this section;

(2) “resource benefit level” means the level of monthly benefits determined under subsections (c)(1) and (3) and (d)(3) of this section to be the highest level which can be paid out of the plan’s available resources;

(3) “available resources” means the plan’s cash, marketable assets, contributions, withdrawal liability payments, and earnings, less reasonable administrative expenses and amounts owed for such plan year to the corporation under section 1431(b)(2) of this title; and

(4) “insolvency year” means a plan year in which a plan is insolvent.

(c) Determination by plan sponsor of plan in reorganization of resource benefit level of plan for each insolvency year; uniform application of suspension of benefits; adjustments of benefit payments

(1) The plan sponsor of a plan in reorganization shall determine in writing the plan’s resource benefit level for each insolvency year, based on the plan sponsor’s reasonable projection of the plan’s available resources and the benefits payable under the plan.

(2) The suspension of benefit payments under this section shall, in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury, apply in substantially uniform proportions to the benefits of all persons in pay status (within the meaning of section 1421(b)(6) of this title) under the plan, except that the Secretary of the Treasury may prescribe rules under which benefit suspensions for different participant groups may be varied equitably to reflect variations in contribution rates and other relevant factors including differences in negotiated levels of financial support for plan benefit obligations.

(3) Notwithstanding paragraph (2), if a plan sponsor determines in writing a resource benefit level for a plan year which is below the level of basic benefits, the payment of all benefits other than basic benefits must be suspended for that plan year.

(4)(A) If, by the end of an insolvency year, the plan sponsor determines in writing that the plan’s available resources in that insolvency year could have supported benefit payments above the resource benefit level for that insolvency year, the plan sponsor shall distribute the excess resources to the participants and beneficiaries who received benefit payments from

the plan in that insolvency year, in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury.

(B) For purposes of this paragraph, the term “excess resources” means available resources above the amount necessary to support the resource benefit level, but no greater than the amount necessary to pay benefits for the plan year at the benefit levels under the plan.

(5) If, by the end of an insolvency year, any benefit has not been paid at the resource benefit level, amounts up to the resource benefit level which were unpaid shall be distributed to the participants and beneficiaries, in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury, to the extent possible taking into account the plan’s total available resources in that insolvency year.

(6) Except as provided in paragraph (4) or (5), a plan is not required to make retroactive benefit payments with respect to that portion of a benefit which was suspended under this section.

(d) Applicability and determinations respecting plan assets; time for determinations of resource benefit level and level of basic benefits

(1) As of the end of the first plan year in which a plan is in reorganization, and at least every 3 plan years thereafter (unless the plan is no longer in reorganization), the plan sponsor shall compare the value of plan assets (determined in accordance with section 1423(b)(3)(B)(ii) of this title) for that plan year with the total amount of benefit payments made under the plan for that plan year. Unless the plan sponsor determines that the value of plan assets exceeds 3 times the total amount of benefit payments, the plan sponsor shall determine whether the plan will be insolvent in any of the next 5 plan years. If the plan sponsor makes such a determination that the plan will be insolvent in any of the next 5 plan years, the plan sponsor shall make the comparison under this paragraph at least annually until the plan sponsor makes a determination that the plan will not be insolvent in any of the next 5 plan years.

(2) If, at any time, the plan sponsor of a plan in reorganization reasonably determines, taking into account the plan’s recent and anticipated financial experience, that the plan’s available resources are not sufficient to pay benefits under the plan when due for the next plan year, the plan sponsor shall make such determination available to interested parties.

(3) The plan sponsor of a plan in reorganization shall determine in writing for each insolvency year the resource benefit level and the level of basic benefits no later than 3 months before the insolvency year.

(e) Notice, etc., requirements of plan sponsor of plan in reorganization regarding insolvency and resource benefit levels

(1) If the plan sponsor of a plan in reorganization determines under subsection (d)(1) or (2) of this section that the plan may become insolvent (within the meaning of subsection (b)(1) of this section), the plan sponsor shall—

(A) notify the Secretary of the Treasury, the corporation, the parties described in section 1422(a)(2) of this title, and the plan partici-

pants and beneficiaries of that determination, and

(B) inform the parties described in section 1422(a)(2) of this title and the plan participants and beneficiaries that if insolvency occurs certain benefit payments will be suspended, but that basic benefits will continue to be paid.

(2) No later than 2 months before the first day of each insolvency year, the plan sponsor of a plan in reorganization shall notify the Secretary of the Treasury, the corporation, and the parties described in paragraph (1)(B) of the resource benefit level determined in writing for that insolvency year.

(3) In any case in which the plan sponsor anticipates that the resource benefit level for an insolvency year may not exceed the level of basic benefits, the plan sponsor shall notify the corporation.

(4) Notice required by this subsection shall be given in accordance with regulations prescribed by the corporation, except that notice to the Secretary of the Treasury shall be given in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury.

(5) The corporation may prescribe a time other than the time prescribed by this section for the making of a determination or the filing of a notice under this section.

(f) Financial assistance from corporation; conditions and criteria applicable

(1) If the plan sponsor of an insolvent plan, for which the resource benefit level is above the level of basic benefits, anticipates that, for any month in an insolvency year, the plan will not have funds sufficient to pay basic benefits, the plan sponsor may apply for financial assistance from the corporation under section 1431 of this title.

(2) A plan sponsor who has determined a resource benefit level for an insolvency year which is below the level of basic benefits shall apply for financial assistance from the corporation under section 1431 of this title.

(Pub. L. 93-406, title IV, §4245, as added Pub. L. 96-364, title I, §104(2), Sept. 26, 1980, 94 Stat. 1259; amended Pub. L. 109-280, title II, §203(a), Aug. 17, 2006, 120 Stat. 886.)

AMENDMENTS

2006—Subsec. (d)(1). Pub. L. 109-280 substituted “5 plan years” for “3 plan years” the second place it appeared and inserted at end “If the plan sponsor makes such a determination that the plan will be insolvent in any of the next 5 plan years, the plan sponsor shall make the comparison under this paragraph at least annually until the plan sponsor makes a determination that the plan will not be insolvent in any of the next 5 plan years.”

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2006 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 109-280, title II, §203(b), Aug. 17, 2006, 120 Stat. 886, provided that: “The amendments made by this section [amending this section] shall apply with respect to determinations made in plan years beginning after 2007.”

WITHDRAWAL LIABILITY OF EMPLOYER FROM PLAN TERMINATING WHILE PLAN INSOLVENT WITHIN THIS SECTION: DETERMINATIONS, FACTORS, ETC.

Pub. L. 96-364, title I, §108(c)(3), Sept. 26, 1980, 94 Stat. 1268, provided that:

“(A) For the purpose of determining the withdrawal liability of an employer under title IV of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 [this subchapter] from a plan that terminates while the plan is insolvent (within the meaning of section 4245 of such Act [this section]), the plan’s unfunded vested benefits shall be reduced by an amount equal to the sum of all overburden credits that were applied in determining the plan’s accumulated funding deficiency for all plan years preceding the first plan year in which the plan is insolvent, plus interest thereon.

“(B) The provisions of subparagraph (A) apply only if—

“(i) the plan would have been eligible for the overburden credit in the last plan year beginning before the date of the enactment of this Act [Sept. 26, 1980], if section 4243 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 [section 1423 of this title] had been in effect for that plan year, and

“(ii) the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation determines that the reduction of unfunded vested benefits under subparagraph (A) would not significantly increase the risk of loss to the corporation.”

PART 4—FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

§ 1431. Assistance by corporation

(a) Authority; procedure applicable; amount

If, upon receipt of an application for financial assistance under section 1426(f) of this title or section 1441(d) of this title, the corporation verifies that the plan is or will be insolvent and unable to pay basic benefits when due, the corporation shall provide the plan financial assistance in an amount sufficient to enable the plan to pay basic benefits under the plan.

(b) Conditions; repayment terms

(1) Financial assistance shall be provided under such conditions as the corporation determines are equitable and are appropriate to prevent unreasonable loss to the corporation with respect to the plan.

(2) A plan which has received financial assistance shall repay the amount of such assistance to the corporation on reasonable terms consistent with regulations prescribed by the corporation.

(c) Assistance pending final determination of application

Pending determination of the amount described in subsection (a) of this section, the corporation may provide financial assistance in such amounts as it considers appropriate in order to avoid undue hardship to plan participants and beneficiaries.

(Pub. L. 93-406, title IV, § 4261, as added Pub. L. 96-364, title I, § 104(2), Sept. 26, 1980, 94 Stat. 1261.)

EFFECTIVE DATE

Part effective Sept. 26, 1980, except as specifically provided, see section 1461(e) of this title.

PART 5—BENEFITS AFTER TERMINATION

§ 1441. Benefits under certain terminated plans

(a) Amendment of plan by plan sponsor to reduce benefits, and suspension of benefit payments

Notwithstanding sections 1053 and 1054 of this title, the plan sponsor of a terminated multiem-

ployer plan to which section 1341a(d) of this title applies shall amend the plan to reduce benefits, and shall suspend benefit payments, as required by this section.

(b) Determinations respecting value of nonforfeitable benefits under terminated plan and value of assets of plan

(1) The value of nonforfeitable benefits under a terminated plan referred to in subsection (a) of this section, and the value of the plan’s assets, shall be determined in writing, in accordance with regulations prescribed by the corporation, as of the end of the plan year during which section 1341a(d) of this title becomes applicable to the plan, and each plan year thereafter.

(2) For purposes of this section, plan assets include outstanding claims for withdrawal liability (within the meaning of section 1301(a)(12) of this title).

(c) Amendment of plan by plan sponsor to reduce benefits for conservation of assets; factors applicable

(1) If, according to the determination made under subsection (b) of this section, the value of nonforfeitable benefits exceeds the value of the plan’s assets, the plan sponsor shall amend the plan to reduce benefits under the plan to the extent necessary to ensure that the plan’s assets are sufficient, as determined and certified in accordance with regulations prescribed by the corporation, to discharge when due all of the plan’s obligations with respect to nonforfeitable benefits.

(2) Any plan amendment required by this subsection shall, in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury—

(A) reduce benefits only to the extent necessary to comply with paragraph (1);

(B) reduce accrued benefits only to the extent that those benefits are not eligible for the corporation’s guarantee under section 1322a(b) of this title;

(C) comply with the rules for and limitations on benefit reductions under a plan in reorganization, as prescribed in section 1425 of this title, except to the extent that the corporation prescribes other rules and limitations in regulations under this section; and

(D) take effect no later than 6 months after the end of the plan year for which it is determined that the value of nonforfeitable benefits exceeds the value of the plan’s assets.

(d) Suspension of benefit payments; determinative factors; powers and duties of plan sponsor; retroactive benefit payments

(1) In any case in which benefit payments under a plan which is insolvent under paragraph (2)(A) exceed the resource benefit level, any such payments which are not basic benefits shall be suspended, in accordance with this subsection, to the extent necessary to reduce the sum of such payments and such basic benefits to the greater of the resource benefit level or the level of basic benefits, unless an alternative procedure is prescribed by the corporation in connection with a supplemental guarantee program established under section 1322a(g)(2) of this title.

(2) For purposes of this subsection, for a plan year—