

Internal Revenue Code Section 410(a)(3)

Minimum participation standards

(a) Participation.

(1) Minimum age and service conditions.

(A) General rule. A trust shall not constitute a qualified trust under section 401(a) if the plan of which it is a part requires, as a condition of participation in the plan, that an employee complete a period of service with the employer or employers maintaining the plan extending beyond the later of the following dates—

- (i) the date on which the employee attains the age of 21; or
- (ii) the date on which he completes 1 year of service.

(B) Special rules for certain plans.

- (i) In the case of any plan which provides that after not more than 2 years of service each participant has a right to 100 percent of his accrued benefit under the plan which is nonforfeitable (within the meaning of section 411) at the time such benefit accrues, clause (ii) of subparagraph (A) shall be applied by substituting '2 years of service' for '1 year of service'.
- (ii) In the case of any plan maintained exclusively for employees of an educational institution (as defined in section 170(b)(1)(A)(ii)) by an employer which is exempt from tax under section 501(a) which provides that each participant having at least 1 year of service has a right to 100 percent of his accrued benefit under the plan which is nonforfeitable (within the meaning of section 411) at the time such benefit accrues, clause (i) of subparagraph (A) shall be applied by substituting '26' for '21'. This clause shall not apply to any plan to which clause (i) applies.

(2) Maximum age conditions. A trust shall not constitute a qualified trust under section 401(a) if the plan of which it is a part excludes from participation (on the basis of age) employees who have attained a specified age.



(3) Definition of year of service.

- (A) General rule. For purposes of this subsection, the term 'year of service' means a 12-month period during which the employee has not less than 1,000 hours of service. For purposes of this paragraph, computation of any 12-month period shall be made with reference to the date on which the employee's employment commenced, except that, under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Labor, such computation may be made by reference to the first day of a plan year in the case of an employee who does not complete 1,000 hours of service during the 12-month period beginning on the date his employment commenced.
- (B) Seasonal industries. In the case of any seasonal industry where the customary period of employment is less than 1,000 hours during a calendar year, the term 'year of service' shall be such period as may be determined under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Labor.
- (C) Hours of service. For purposes of this subsection, the term 'hour of service' means a time of service determined under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Labor.
- (D) Maritime industries. For purposes of this subsection, in the case of any maritime industry, 125 days of service shall be treated as 1,000 hours of service. The Secretary of Labor may prescribe regulations to carry out this subparagraph.