

## Cafeteria Plans and Salary Reduction Agreements

### A. General Definition

Under salary reduction agreements, an employee can take advantage of tax deferral through 401(k) or 403(b) plans or by receiving tax-free benefits through a cafeteria plan. Under 401(k) and 403(b) plans, amounts reducing salary are invested in selected investments or annuities for future retirement. Under a cafeteria plan, an employer offers a set of fringe benefits from which participating employees may select. The cafeteria plan can be funded with employer contributions, employee contributions (usually through salary reduction agreements), or a combination of both. The cafeteria plan results in a lower taxable income to the employee where contributions to the plan are from pre-tax income through salary reduction agreements. Qualified benefits which may be offered under a cafeteria plan include:

1. Coverage under an accident or health plan or Health Savings Account (HSA) to the extent that the coverage is excludable from income under Code Section 106 or 223.
2. Group term life insurance coverage that is excludable from gross income under Code Section 79.
3. Dependent care assistance programs under Code Section 129.
4. Qualified cash or deferred arrangements.
5. Adoption assistance programs that meet the requirements of Code Section 137.
6. Qualified group legal services plans.
7. Flexible Spending Plans

### B. Application to the Guidelines

The gross income of the wage earner, regardless of whether it is taxable or nontaxable, is to be used to compute child support payments. Additionally, costs pertinent to child support computations (child care, health insurance premiums, etc.) that were withheld on a pre-tax basis from the employee's salary would also be considered. Benefits paid by the employer that are truly the company's expenses and not a reduction of the employee's gross income would be ignored.