

Reg. Section 1.263(a)-4(f)

Amounts paid to acquire or create intangibles

(f) 12-month rule—

- (1) In general. Except as otherwise provided in this paragraph (f), a taxpayer is not required to capitalize under this section amounts paid to create (or to facilitate the creation of) any right or benefit for the taxpayer that does not extend beyond the earlier of—
 - (i) 12 months after the first date on which the taxpayer realizes the right or benefit; or
 - (ii) The end of the taxable year following the taxable year in which the payment is made.
- (2) Duration of benefit for contract terminations. For purposes of this paragraph (f), amounts paid to terminate a contract or other agreement described in paragraph (d)(7)(i) of this section prior to its expiration date (or amounts paid to facilitate such termination) create a benefit for the taxpayer that lasts for the unexpired term of the agreement immediately before the date of the termination. If the terms of a contract or other agreement described in paragraph (d)(7)(i) of this section permit the taxpayer to terminate the contract or agreement after a notice period, amounts paid by the taxpayer to terminate the contract or agreement before the end of the notice period create a benefit for the taxpayer that lasts for the amount of time by which the notice period is shortened.
- (3) Inapplicability to created financial interests and self-created amortizable section 197 intangibles. Paragraph (f)(1) of this section does not apply to amounts paid to create (or facilitate the creation of) an intangible described in paragraph (d)(2) of this section (relating to amounts paid to create financial interests) or to amounts paid to create (or facilitate the creation of) an intangible that constitutes an amortizable section 197 intangible within the meaning of section 197(c).
- (4) Inapplicability to rights of indefinite duration. Paragraph (f)(1) of this section does not apply to amounts paid to create (or facilitate the creation of) an intangible of indefinite duration. A right has an indefinite duration if it has no period of duration fixed by agreement or by law, or if it is not based on a period of time, such as a right attributable to an agreement to provide or receive a fixed amount of goods or services. For example, a license granted by a governmental agency that permits the taxpayer to operate a business conveys a right of

indefinite duration if the license may be revoked only upon the taxpayer's violation of the terms of the license.

(5) Rights subject to renewal—

- (i) In general. For purposes of paragraph (f)(1) of this section, the duration of a right includes any renewal period if all of the facts and circumstances in existence during the taxable year in which the right is created indicate a reasonable expectancy of renewal.
- (ii) Reasonable expectancy of renewal. The following factors are significant in determining whether there exists a reasonable expectancy of renewal:
 - (A) Renewal history. The fact that similar rights are historically renewed is evidence of a reasonable expectancy of renewal. On the other hand, the fact that similar rights are rarely renewed is evidence of a lack of a reasonable expectancy of renewal. Where the taxpayer has no experience with similar rights, or where the taxpayer holds similar rights only occasionally, this factor is less indicative of a reasonable expectancy of renewal.
 - (B) Economics of the transaction. The fact that renewal is necessary for the taxpayer to earn back its investment in the right is evidence of a reasonable expectancy of renewal. For example, if a taxpayer pays \$14,000 to enter into a renewable contract with an initial 9-month term that is expected to generate income to the taxpayer of \$1,000 per month, the fact that renewal is necessary for the taxpayer to earn back its \$14,000 payment is evidence of a reasonable expectancy of renewal.
 - (C) Likelihood of renewal by other party. Evidence that indicates a likelihood of renewal by the other party to a right, such as a bargain renewal option or similar arrangement, is evidence of a reasonable expectancy of renewal. However, the mere fact that the other party will have the opportunity to renew on the same terms as are available to others is not evidence of a reasonable expectancy of renewal.
 - (D) Terms of renewal. The fact that material terms of the right are subject to renegotiation at the end of the initial term is evidence of a lack of a reasonable expectancy of renewal. For example, if the parties to an agreement must renegotiate price or amount, the renegotiation requirement is evidence of a lack of a reasonable expectancy of renewal.
 - (E) Terminations. The fact that similar rights are typically terminated prior to renewal is evidence of a lack of a reasonable expectancy of renewal.

- (iii) Safe harbor pooling method. In lieu of applying the reasonable expectancy of renewal test described in paragraph (f)(5)(ii) of this section to each separate right created during a taxable year, a taxpayer that reasonably expects to enter into at least 25 similar rights during the taxable year may establish a pool of similar rights for which the initial term does not extend beyond the period prescribed in paragraph (f)(1) of this section and may elect to apply the reasonable expectancy of renewal test to that pool. See paragraph (h) of this section for additional rules relating to pooling. The application of paragraph (f)(1) of this section to each pool is determined in the following manner:
 - (A) All amounts (except de minimis costs described in paragraph (d)(6)(v) of this section) paid to create the rights included in the pool and all amounts paid to facilitate the creation of the rights included in the pool are aggregated.
 - (B) If less than 20 percent of the rights in the pool are reasonably expected to be renewed beyond the period prescribed in paragraph (f)(1) of this section, all rights in the pool are treated as having a duration that does not extend beyond the period prescribed in paragraph (f)(1) of this section, and the taxpayer is not required to capitalize under this section any portion of the aggregate amount described in paragraph (f)(5)(iii)(A) of this section.
 - (C) If more than 80 percent of the rights in the pool are reasonably expected to be renewed beyond the period prescribed in paragraph (f)(1) of this section, all rights in the pool are treated as having a duration that extends beyond the period prescribed in paragraph (f)(1) of this section, and the taxpayer is required to capitalize under this section the aggregate amount described in paragraph (f)(5)(iii)(A) of this section.
 - (D) If 20 percent or more, but 80 percent or less, of the rights in the pool are reasonably expected to be renewed beyond the period prescribed in paragraph (f)(1) of this section, the aggregate amount described in paragraph (f)(5)(iii)(A) of this section is multiplied by the percentage of the rights in the pool that are reasonably expected to be renewed beyond the period prescribed in paragraph (f)(1) of this section and the taxpayer must capitalize the resulting amount under this section by treating such amount as creating a separate intangible. The amount determined by multiplying the aggregate amount described in paragraph (f)(5)(iii)(A) of this section by the percentage of rights in the pool that are not reasonably expected to be renewed beyond the period prescribed in paragraph (f)(1) of this section is not required to be capitalized under this section.
- (6) Coordination with section 461. In the case of a taxpayer using an accrual method of accounting, the rules of this paragraph (f) do not affect the determination of whether a liability is incurred during the taxable year, including the determination

of whether economic performance has occurred with respect to the liability. See § 1.461-4 for rules relating to economic performance.

(7) Election to capitalize. A taxpayer may elect not to apply the rule contained in paragraph (f)(1) of this section. An election made under this paragraph (f)(7) applies to all similar transactions during the taxable year to which paragraph (f)(1) of this section would apply (but for the election under this paragraph (f)(7)). For example, a taxpayer may elect under this paragraph (f)(7) to capitalize its costs of prepaying insurance contracts for 12 months, but may continue to apply the rule in paragraph (f)(1) to its costs of entering into non-renewable, 12-month service contracts. A taxpayer makes the election by treating the amounts as capital expenditures in its timely filed original federal income tax return (including extensions) for the taxable year during which the amounts are paid. In the case of an affiliated group of corporations filing a consolidated return, the election is made separately with respect to each member of the group, and not with respect to the group as a whole. In the case of an S corporation or partnership, the election is made by the S corporation or by the partnership, and not by the shareholders or partners. An election made under this paragraph (f)(7) is revocable with respect to each taxable year for which made only with the consent of the Commissioner.

(8) Examples. The rules of this paragraph (f) are illustrated by the following examples, in which it is assumed (unless otherwise stated) that the taxpayer is a calendar year, accrual method taxpayer that does not have a short taxable year in any taxable year and has not made an election under paragraph (f)(7) of this section:

Example 1. Prepaid expenses. On December 1, 2005, N corporation pays a \$10,000 insurance premium to obtain a property insurance policy (with no cash value) with a 1-year term that begins on February 1, 2006. The amount paid by N is a prepaid expense described in paragraph (d)(3) of this section and not paragraph (d)(2) of this section. Because the right or benefit attributable to the \$10,000 payment extends beyond the end of the taxable year following the taxable year in which the payment is made, the 12-month rule provided by this paragraph (f) does not apply. N must capitalize the \$10,000 payment.

Example 2. Prepaid expenses.

- (i) Assume the same facts as in Example 1, except that the policy has a term beginning on December 15, 2005. The 12-month rule of this paragraph (f) applies to the \$10,000 payment because the right or benefit attributable to the payment neither extends more than 12 months beyond December 15, 2005 (the first date the benefit is realized by the taxpayer) nor beyond the end of the taxable year following the taxable year in which the payment is made. Accordingly, N is not required to capitalize the \$10,000 payment.
- (ii) Alternatively, assume N capitalizes prepaid expenses for financial accounting and reporting purposes and elects under paragraph (f)(7) of this section not to apply the 12-month rule contained in paragraph (f)(1) of this

section. N must capitalize the \$10,000 payment for Federal income tax purposes.

Example 3. Financial interests. On October 1, 2005, X corporation makes a 9-month loan to B in the principal amount of \$250,000. The principal amount of the loan to B constitutes an amount paid to create or originate a financial interest under paragraph (d)(2)(i)(B) of this section. The 9-month term of the loan does not extend beyond the period prescribed by paragraph (f)(1) of this section. However, as provided by paragraph (f)(3) of this section, the rules of this paragraph (f) do not apply to intangibles described in paragraph (d)(2) of this section. Accordingly, X must capitalize the \$250,000 loan amount.

Example 4. Financial interests. X corporation owns all of the outstanding stock of Z corporation. On December 1, 2005, Y corporation pays X \$1,000,000 in exchange for X's grant of a 9-month call option to Y permitting Y to purchase all of the outstanding stock of Z. Y's payment to X constitutes an amount paid to create or originate an option with X under paragraph (d)(2)(i)(C)(7) of this section. The 9-month term of the option does not extend beyond the period prescribed by paragraph (f)(1) of this section. However, as provided by paragraph (f)(3) of this section, the rules of this paragraph (f) do not apply to intangibles described in paragraph (d)(2) of this section. Accordingly, Y must capitalize the \$1,000,000 payment.

Example 5. License.

- (i) On July 1, 2005, R corporation pays \$10,000 to state X to obtain a license to operate a business in state X for a period of 5 years. The terms of the license require R to pay state X an annual fee of \$500 due on July 1, 2005, and each of the succeeding four years. R pays the \$500 fee on July 1 as required by the license.
- (ii) R's payment of \$10,000 is an amount paid to a governmental agency for a license granted by that agency to which paragraph (d)(5) of this section applies. Because R's payment creates rights or benefits for R that extend beyond 12 months after the first date on which R realizes the rights or benefits attributable to the payment and beyond the end of 2006 (the taxable year following the taxable year in which the payment is made), the rules of this paragraph (f) do not apply to R's payment. Accordingly, R must capitalize the \$10,000 payment.
- (iii) R's payment of each \$500 annual fee is a prepaid expense described in paragraph (d)(3) of this section. R is not required to capitalize the \$500 fee in each taxable year. The rules of this paragraph (f) apply to each such payment because each payment provides a right or benefit to R that does not extend beyond 12 months after the first date on which R realizes the rights or benefits attributable to the payment and does not extend beyond the end of the taxable year following the taxable year in which the payment is made.

Example 6. Lease. On December 1, 2005, W corporation enters into a lease agreement with X corporation under which W agrees to lease property to X for a period of 9 months, beginning on December 1, 2005. W pays its outside counsel \$7,000 for legal services rendered in drafting the lease agreement and negotiating with X. The agreement between W and X is an agreement providing W the right to be compensated for the use of property, as described in paragraph (d)(6)(i)(A) of this section. W's \$7,000 payment to its outside counsel is an amount paid to facilitate W's creation of the lease as described in paragraph (e)(1)(i) of this section. The 12-month rule of this paragraph (f) applies to the \$7,000 payment because the right or benefit that the \$7,000 payment facilitates the creation of neither extends more than 12 months beyond December 1, 2005 (the first date the benefit is realized by the taxpayer) nor beyond the end of the taxable year following the taxable year in which the payment is made. Accordingly, W is not required to capitalize its payment to its outside counsel.

Example 7. Certain contract terminations. V corporation owns real property that it has leased to A for a period of 15 years. When the lease has a remaining unexpired term of 5 years, V and A agree to terminate the lease, enabling V to use the property in its trade or business. V pays A \$100,000 in exchange for A's agreement to terminate the lease. V's payment to A to terminate the lease is described in paragraph (d)(7)(i)(A) of this section. Under paragraph (f)(2) of this section, V's payment creates a benefit for V with a duration of 5 years, the remaining unexpired term of the lease as of the date of the termination. Because the benefit attributable to the expenditure extends beyond 12 months after the first date on which V realizes the rights or benefits attributable to the payment and beyond the end of the taxable year following the taxable year in which the payment is made, the rules of this paragraph (f) do not apply to the payment. V must capitalize the \$100,000 payment.

Example 8. Certain contract terminations. Assume the same facts as in Example 7, except that the lease is terminated when it has a remaining unexpired term of 10 months. Under paragraph (f)(2) of this section, V's payment creates a benefit for V with a duration of 10 months. The 12-month rule of this paragraph (f) applies to the payment because the benefit attributable to the payment neither extends more than 12 months beyond the date of termination (the first date the benefit is realized by V) nor beyond the end of the taxable year following the taxable year in which the payment is made. Accordingly, V is not required to capitalize the \$100,000 payment.

Example 9. Certain contract terminations. Assume the same facts as in Example 7, except that either party can terminate the lease upon 12 months notice. When the lease has a remaining unexpired term of 5 years, V wants to terminate the lease, however, V does not want to wait another 12 months. V pays A \$50,000 for the ability to terminate the lease with one month's notice. V's payment to A to terminate the lease is described in paragraph (d)(7)(i)(A) of this section. Under paragraph (f)(2) of this section, V's payment creates a benefit for V with a duration of 11 months, the time by which the notice period is shortened. The 12-month rule of this paragraph (f) applies to V's \$50,000 payment because the benefit attributable to the payment neither extends more than 12 months beyond

the date of termination (the first date the benefit is realized by V) nor beyond the end of the taxable year following the taxable year in which the payment is made. Accordingly, V is not required to capitalize the \$50,000 payment.

Example 10. Coordination with section 461.

- (i) U corporation leases office space from W corporation at a monthly rental rate of \$2,000. On August 1, 2005, U prepays its office rent expense for the first six months of 2006 in the amount of \$12,000. For purposes of this example, it is assumed that the recurring item exception provided by § 1.461-5 does not apply and that the lease between W and U is not a section 467 rental agreement as defined in section 467(d).
- (ii) Under § 1.461-4(d)(3), U's prepayment of rent is a payment for the use of property by U for which economic performance occurs ratably over the period of time U is entitled to use the property. Accordingly, because economic performance with respect to U's prepayment of rent does not occur until 2006, U's prepaid rent is not incurred in 2005 and therefore is not properly taken into account through capitalization, deduction, or otherwise in 2005. Thus, the rules of this paragraph (f) do not apply to U's prepayment of its rent.
- (iii) Alternatively, assume that U uses the cash method of accounting and the economic performance rules in § 1.461-4 therefore do not apply to U. The 12-month rule of this paragraph (f) applies to the \$12,000 payment because the rights or benefits attributable to U's prepayment of its rent do not extend beyond December 31, 2006. Accordingly, U is not required to capitalize its prepaid rent.

Example 11. Coordination with section 461. N corporation pays R corporation, an advertising and marketing firm, \$40,000 on August 1, 2005, for advertising and marketing services to be provided to N throughout calendar year 2006. For purposes of this example, it is assumed that the recurring item exception provided by § 1.461-5 does not apply. Under § 1.461-4(d)(2), N's payment arises out of the provision of services to N by R for which economic performance occurs as the services are provided. Accordingly, because economic performance with respect to N's prepaid advertising expense does not occur until 2006, N's prepaid advertising expense is not incurred in 2005 and therefore is not properly taken into account through capitalization, deduction, or otherwise in 2005. Thus, the rules of this paragraph (f) do not apply to N's payment.