

CHAPTER 24—COLLECTION OF INCOME TAX AT SOURCE ON WAGES

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SEC. 3401. DEFINITIONS.

(a) **WAGES.**—For purposes of this chapter, the term "wages" means all remuneration (other than fees paid to a public official) for services performed by an employee for his employer, including the cash value of all remuneration paid in any medium other than cash; except that such term shall not include remuneration paid—

(1) for active service as a member of the Armed Forces of the United States performed in a month for which such member is entitled to the benefits of section 112, or

(2) for agricultural labor (as defined in section 3121 (g)), or

(3) for domestic service in a private home, local college club, or local chapter of a college fraternity or sorority, or

(4) for service not in the course of the employer's trade or business performed in any calendar quarter by an employee, unless the cash remuneration paid for such service is \$50 or more and such service is performed by an individual who is regularly employed by such employer to perform such service. For purposes of this paragraph, an individual shall be deemed to be regularly employed by an employer during a calendar quarter only if—

(A) on each of some 24 days during such quarter such individual performs for such employer for some portion of the day service not in the course of the employer's trade or business, or

(B) such individual was regularly employed (as determined under subparagraph (A)) by such employer in the performance of such service during the preceding calendar quarter, or

(5) for services by a citizen or resident of the United States for a foreign government or an international organization, or

(6) for services performed by a nonresident alien individual, other than—

(A) a resident of a contiguous country who enters and leaves the United States at frequent intervals, or

(B) a resident of Puerto Rico if such services are performed as an employee of the United States or any agency thereof, or

(7) for such services, performed by a nonresident alien individual who is a resident of a contiguous country and who enters and leaves the United States at frequent intervals, as may be designated by regulations prescribed by the Secretary or his delegate, or

(8) (A) for services for an employer (other than the United States or any agency thereof) —

(i) performed by a citizen of the United States if, at the time of the payment of such remuneration, it is reasonable to believe

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that such remuneration will be excluded from gross income under section 911, or

(ii) performed in a foreign country by such a citizen if, at the time of the payment of such remuneration, the employer is required by the law of any foreign country to withhold income tax upon such remuneration, or

(B) for services for an employer (other than the United States or any agency thereof) performed by a citizen of the United States within a possession of the United States (other than Puerto Rico), if it is reasonable to believe that at least 80 percent of the remuneration to be paid to the employee by such employer during the calendar year will be for such services, or

(C) for services for an employer (other than the United States or any agency thereof) performed by a citizen of the United States within Puerto Rico, if it is reasonable to believe that during the entire calendar year the employee will be a bona fide resident of Puerto Rico, or

(9) for services performed by a duly ordained, commissioned, or licensed minister of a church in the exercise of his ministry or by a member of a religious order in the exercise of duties required by such order, or

(10) (A) for services performed by an individual under the age of 18 in the delivery or distribution of newspapers or shopping news, not including delivery or distribution to any point for subsequent delivery or distribution, or

(B) for services performed by an individual in, and at the time of, the sale of newspapers or magazines to ultimate consumers, under an arrangement under which the newspapers or magazines are to be sold by him at a fixed price, his compensation being based on the retention of the excess of such price over the amount at which the newspapers or magazines are charged to him, whether or not he is guaranteed a minimum amount of compensation for such service, or is entitled to be credited with the unsold newspapers or magazines turned back, or

(11) for services not in the course of the employer's trade or business, to the extent paid in any medium other than cash, or

(12) to, or on behalf of, an employee or his beneficiary—

(A) from or to a trust described in section 401 (a) which is exempt from tax under section 501 (a) at the time of such payment unless such payment is made to an employee of the trust as remuneration for services rendered as such employee and not as a beneficiary of the trust, or

(B) under or to an annuity plan which, at the time of such payment, meets the requirements of section 401 (a) (3), (4), (5), and (6).

(b) PAYROLL PERIOD.—For purposes of this chapter, the term "payroll period" means a period for which a payment of wages is ordinarily made to the employee by his employer, and the term "miscellaneous payroll period" means a payroll period other than a daily, weekly, biweekly, semimonthly, monthly, quarterly, semiannual, or annual payroll period.

(c) EMPLOYEE.—For purposes of this chapter, the term "employee" includes an officer, employee, or elected official of the United States,

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a State, Territory, or any political subdivision thereof, or the District of Columbia, or any agency or instrumentality of any one or more of the foregoing. The term "employee" also includes an officer of a corporation.

(d) EMPLOYER.—For purposes of this chapter, the term "employer" means the person for whom an individual performs or performed any service, of whatever nature, as the employee of such person, except that—

(1) if the person for whom the individual performs or performed the services does not have control of the payment of the wages for such services, the term "employer" (except for purposes of subsection (a)) means the person having control of the payment of such wages, and

(2) in the case of a person paying wages on behalf of a nonresident alien individual, foreign partnership, or foreign corporation, not engaged in trade or business within the United States, the term "employer" (except for purposes of subsection (a)) means such person.

(e) NUMBER OF WITHHOLDING EXEMPTIONS CLAIMED.—For purposes of this chapter, the term "number of withholding exemptions claimed" means the number of withholding exemptions claimed in a withholding exemption certificate in effect under section 3402 (f), or in effect under the corresponding section of prior law, except that if no such certificate is in effect, the number of withholding exemptions claimed shall be considered to be zero.

SEC. 3402. INCOME TAX COLLECTED AT SOURCE.

(a) REQUIREMENT OF WITHHOLDING.—Every employer making payment of wages shall deduct and withhold upon such wages a tax equal to 18 percent of the amount by which the wages exceed the number of withholding exemptions claimed, multiplied by the amount of one such exemption as shown in subsection (b) (1).

(b) PERCENTAGE METHOD OF WITHHOLDING.—

(1) The table referred to in subsection (a) is as follows:

Percentage Method Withholding Table

Payroll period	Amount of one withholding exemption
Weekly	\$13. 00
Biweekly	26.00
Semimonthly	28 00
Monthly.	56.00
Quarterly	167. 00
Semiannual	333. 00
	667. 00
Daily or miscellaneous (per day of such period)	1.80

(2) If wages are paid with respect to a period which is not a payroll period, the withholding exemption allowable with respect to each payment of such wages shall be the exemption allowed for a miscellaneous payroll period containing a number of days (including Sundays and holidays) equal to the number of days in the period with respect to which such wages are paid.

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(3) In any case in which wages are paid by an employer without regard to any payroll period or other period, the withholding exemption allowable with respect to each payment of such wages shall be the exemption allowed for a miscellaneous payroll period containing a number of days equal to the number of days (including Sundays and holidays) which have elapsed since the date of the last payment of such wages by such employer during the calendar year, or the date of commencement of employment with such employer during such year, or January 1 of such year, whichever is the later.

(4) In any case in which the period, or the time described in paragraph (3), in respect of any wages is less than one week, the Secretary or his delegate, under regulations prescribed by him, may authorize an employer, in computing the tax required to be deducted and withheld, to use the excess of the aggregate of the wages paid to the employee during the calendar week over the withholding exemption allowed by this subsection for a weekly payroll period.

(5) In determining the amount to be deducted and withheld under this subsection, the wages may, at the election of the employer, be computed to the nearest dollar.

(c) WAGE BRACKET WITHHOLDING.—

(1) At the election of the employer with respect to any employee, the employer shall deduct and withhold upon the wages paid to such employee a tax determined in accordance with the following tables, which shall be in lieu of the tax required to be deducted and withheld under subsection (a):

If the payroll period with respect to an employee is weekly—

NOTE: WAGE WITHHOLDING TABLE OMITTED

§3402(b)(3)

**NOTE: PAGES 459 - 465 (WAGE WITHHOLDING TABLES)
OMITTED**

**For review of these tables, please see the PDF file
of the 1954 Internal Revenue Code**

(2) If wages are paid with respect to a period which is not a payroll period, the amount to be deducted and withheld shall be that applicable in the case of a miscellaneous payroll period containing a number of days (including Sundays and holidays) equal to the number of days in the period with respect to which such wages are paid.

(3) In any case in which wages are paid by an employer without regard to any payroll period or other period, the amount to be deducted and withheld shall be that applicable in the case of a miscellaneous payroll period containing a number of days equal to the number of days (including Sundays and holidays) which have elapsed since the date of the last payment of such wages by such employer during the calendar year, or the date of commencement of employment with such employer during such year, or January 1 of such year, whichever is the later.

(4) In any case in which the period, or the time described in paragraph (3), in respect of any wages is less than one week, the Secretary or his delegate, under regulations prescribed by him, may authorize an employer to determine the amount to be deducted and withheld under the tables applicable in the case of a weekly payroll period, in which case the aggregate of the wages paid to the employee during the calendar week shall be considered the weekly wages.

(5) If the wages exceed the highest wage bracket, in determining the amount to be deducted and withheld under this subsection, the wages may, at the election of the employer, be computed to the nearest dollar.

(d) TAX PAID BY RECIPIENT.—If the employer, in violation of the provisions of this chapter, fails to deduct and withhold the tax under this chapter, and thereafter the tax against which such tax may be credited is paid, the tax so required to be deducted and withheld shall not be collected from the employer; but this subsection shall in no case relieve the employer from liability for any penalties or additions to the tax otherwise applicable in respect of such failure to deduct and withhold.

(e) INCLUDED AND EXCLUDED WAGES.—If the remuneration paid by an employer to an employee for services performed during one-half or more of any payroll period of not more than 31 consecutive days constitutes wages, all the remuneration paid by such employer to such employee for such period shall be deemed to be wages; but if the remuneration paid by an employer to an employee for services performed during more than one-half of any such payroll period does not constitute wages, then none of the remuneration paid by such employer to such employee for such period shall be deemed to be wages.

(f) WITHHOLDING EXEMPTIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An employee receiving wages shall on any day be entitled to the following withholding exemptions:

(A) an exemption for himself;

(B) one additional exemption for himself if, on the basis of facts existing at the beginning of such day, there may reasonably be expected to be allowable an exemption under section 151 (c) (1) (relating to old age) for the taxable year under subtitle A in respect of which amounts deducted and withheld under this

chapter in the calendar year in which such day falls are allowed as a credit;

(C) one additional exemption for himself if, on the basis of facts existing at the beginning of such day, there may reasonably be expected to be allowable an exemption under section 151 (d) (1) (relating to the blind) for the taxable year under subtitle A in respect of which amounts deducted and withheld under this chapter in the calendar year in which such day falls are allowed as a credit;

(D) if the employee is married, any exemption to which his spouse is entitled, or would be entitled if such spouse were an employee receiving wages, under subparagraph (A), (B), or (C), but only if such spouse does not have in effect a withholding exemption certificate claiming such exemption; and

(E) an exemption for each individual with respect to whom, on the basis of facts existing at the beginning of such day, there may reasonably be expected to be allowable an exemption under section 151 (e) for the taxable year under subtitle A in respect of which amounts deducted and withheld under this chapter in the calendar year in which such day falls are allowed as a credit.

(2) EXEMPTION CERTIFICATES.—

(A) ON COMMENCEMENT OF EMPLOYMENT.—On or before the date of the commencement of employment with an employer, the employee shall furnish the employer with a signed withholding exemption certificate relating to the number of withholding exemptions which he claims, which shall in no event exceed the number to which he is entitled.

(B) CHANGE OF STATUS.—If, on any day during the calendar year, the number of withholding exemptions to which the employee is entitled is less than the number of withholding exemptions claimed by the employee on the withholding exemption certificate then in effect with respect to him, the employee shall within 10 days thereafter furnish the employer with a new withholding exemption certificate relating to the number of withholding exemptions which the employee then claims, which shall in no event exceed the number to which he is entitled on such day. If, on any day during the calendar year, the number of withholding exemptions to which the employee is entitled is greater than the number of withholding exemptions claimed, the employee may furnish the employer with a new withholding exemption certificate relating to the number of withholding exemptions which the employee then claims, which shall in no event exceed the number to which he is entitled on such day.

(C) CHANGE OF STATUS WHICH AFFECTS NEXT CALENDAR YEAR.—If on any day during the calendar year the number of withholding exemptions to which the employee will be, or may reasonably be expected to be, entitled at the beginning of his next taxable year under subtitle A is different from the number to which the employee is entitled on such day, the employee shall, in such cases and at such times as the Secretary or his delegate may by regulations prescribe, furnish the employer with a withholding exemption certificate relating to the number of withholding exemptions which he claims with respect to such next taxable

year, which shall in no event exceed the number to which he will be, or may reasonably be expected to be, so entitled.

(3) WHEN CERTIFICATE TAKES EFFECT.—

(A) FIRST CERTIFICATE FURNISHED.—A withholding exemption certificate furnished the employer in cases in which no previous such certificate is in effect shall take effect as of the beginning of the first payroll period ending, or the first payment of wages made without regard to a payroll period, on or after the date on which such certificate is so furnished.

(B) FURNISHED TO TAKE PLACE OF EXISTING CERTIFICATE.—A withholding exemption certificate furnished the employer in cases in which a previous such certificate is in effect shall take effect with respect to the first payment of wages made on or after the first status determination date which occurs at least 30 days from the date on which such certificate is so furnished, except that at the election of the employer such certificate may be made effective with respect to any payment of wages made on or after the date on which such certificate is so furnished; but a certificate furnished pursuant to paragraph (2) (C) shall not take effect, and may not be made effective, with respect to any payment of wages made in the calendar year in which the certificate is furnished. For purposes of this subparagraph the term "status determination date" means January 1 and July 1 of each year.

(4) PERIOD DURING WHICH CERTIFICATE REMAINS IN EFFECT.—A withholding exemption certificate which takes effect under this subsection, or which on December 31, 1954, was in effect under the corresponding subsection of prior law, shall continue in effect with respect to the employer until another such certificate takes effect under this subsection.

(5) FORM AND CONTENTS OF CERTIFICATE.—Withholding exemption certificates shall be in such form and contain such information as the Secretary or his delegate may by regulations prescribe.

(g) OVERLAPPING PAY PERIODS, AND PAYMENT BY AGENT OR FIDUCIARY.—If a payment of wages is made to an employee by an employer—

(1) with respect to a payroll period or other period, any part of which is included in a payroll period or other period with respect to which wages are also paid to such employee by such employer, or

(2) without regard to any payroll period or other period, but on or prior to the expiration of a payroll period or other period with respect to which wages are also paid to such employee by such employer, or

(3) with respect to a period beginning in one and ending in another calendar year, or

(4) through an agent, fiduciary, or other person who also has the control, receipt, custody, or disposal of, or pays, the wages payable by another employer to such employee,

the manner of withholding and the amount to be deducted and withheld under this chapter shall be determined in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary or his delegate under which the withholding exemption allowed to the employee in any calendar year shall approximate the withholding exemption allowable with respect to an annual payroll period.

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(h) WITHHOLDING ON BASIS OF AVERAGE WAGES.—The Secretary or his delegate may, under regulations prescribed by him, authorize employers—

(1) to estimate the wages which will be paid to any employee in any quarter of the calendar year,

(2) to determine the amount to be deducted and withheld upon each payment of wages to such employee during such quarter as if the appropriate average of the wages so estimated constituted the actual wages paid, and

(3) to deduct and withhold upon any payment of wages to such employee during such quarter such amount as may be necessary to adjust the amount actually deducted and withheld upon the wages of such employee during such quarter to the amount required to be deducted and withheld during such quarter without regard to this subsection.

(i) ADDITIONAL WITHHOLDING.—The Secretary or his delegate is authorized by regulations to provide, under such conditions and to such extent as he deems proper, for withholding in addition to that otherwise required under this section in cases in which the employer and the employee agree (in such form as the Secretary or his delegate may by regulations prescribe) to such additional withholding. Such additional withholding shall for all purposes be considered tax required to be deducted and withheld under this chapter.

SEC. 3403. LIABILITY FOR TAX.

The employer shall be liable for the payment of the tax required to be deducted and withheld under this chapter, and shall not be liable to any person for the amount of any such payment.

SEC. 3404. RETURN AND PAYMENT BY GOVERNMENTAL EMPLOYER.

If the employer is the United States, or a State, Territory, or political subdivision thereof, or the District of Columbia, or any agency or instrumentality of any one or more of the foregoing, the return of the amount deducted and withheld upon any wages may be made by any officer or employee of the United States, or of such State, Territory, or political subdivision, or of the District of Columbia, or of such agency or instrumentality, as the case may be, having control of the payment of such wages, or appropriately designated for that purpose.