

Reg. Section 1.263(a)-4(e)(2)

Amounts paid to acquire or create intangibles.

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(e) Transaction costs –

(1) Scope of facilitate –

- (i) In general. Except as otherwise provided in this section, an amount is paid to facilitate the acquisition or creation of an intangible (the transaction) if the amount is paid in the process of investigating or otherwise pursuing the transaction. Whether an amount is paid in the process of investigating or otherwise pursuing the transaction is determined based on all of the facts and circumstances. In determining whether an amount is paid to facilitate a transaction, the fact that the amount would (or would not) have been paid but for the transaction is relevant, but is not determinative. An amount paid to determine the value or price of an intangible is an amount paid in the process of investigating or otherwise pursuing the transaction.
- (ii) Treatment of termination payments. An amount paid to terminate (or facilitate the termination of) an existing agreement does not facilitate the acquisition or creation of another agreement under this section. See paragraph (d)(6)(iii) of this section for the treatment of termination fees paid to the other party (or parties) of a renegotiated agreement.
- (iii) Special rule for contracts. An amount is treated as not paid in the process of investigating or otherwise pursuing the creation of an agreement described in paragraph (d)(2) or (d)(6) of this section if the amount relates to activities performed before the earlier of the date the taxpayer begins preparing its bid for the agreement or the date the taxpayer begins discussing or negotiating the agreement with another party to the agreement.
- (iv) Borrowing costs. An amount paid to facilitate a borrowing does not facilitate an acquisition or creation of an intangible described in paragraphs (b)(1)(i) through (iv) of this section. See §§ 1.263(a)-5 and 1.446-5 for the treatment of an amount paid to facilitate a borrowing.
- (v) Special rule for stock redemption costs of open-end regulated investment companies. An amount paid by an open-end regulated investment company (within the meaning of section 851) to facilitate a redemption of its stock is treated as an amount that does not facilitate the acquisition of an intangible under this section.



(2) Coordination with paragraph (d) of this section. In the case of an amount paid to facilitate the creation of an intangible described in paragraph (d) of this section, the provisions of this paragraph (e) apply regardless of whether a payment described in paragraph (d) is made.

(3) Transaction. For purposes of this section, the term transaction means all of the factual elements comprising an acquisition or creation of an intangible and includes a series of steps carried out as part of a single plan. Thus, a transaction can involve more than one invoice and more than one intangible. For example, a purchase of intangibles under one purchase agreement constitutes a single transaction, notwithstanding the fact that the acquisition involves multiple intangibles and the amounts paid to facilitate the acquisition are capable of being allocated among the various intangibles acquired.

(4) Simplifying conventions –

(i) In general. For purposes of this section, employee compensation (within the meaning of paragraph (e)(4)(ii) of this section), overhead, and de minimis costs (within the meaning of paragraph (e)(4)(iii) of this section) are treated as amounts that do not facilitate the acquisition or creation of an intangible.

(ii) Employee compensation --

(A) In general. The term employee compensation means compensation (including salary, bonuses and commissions) paid to an employee of the taxpayer. For purposes of this section, whether an individual is an employee is determined in accordance with the rules contained in section 3401(c) and the regulations thereunder.

(B) Certain amounts treated as employee compensation. For purposes of this section, a guaranteed payment to a partner in a partnership is treated as employee compensation. For purposes of this section, annual compensation paid to a director of a corporation is treated as employee compensation. For example, an amount paid to a director of a corporation for attendance at a regular meeting of the board of directors (or committee thereof) is treated as employee compensation for purposes of this section. However, an amount paid to a director for attendance at a special meeting of the board of directors (or committee thereof) is not treated as employee compensation. An amount paid to a person that is not an employee of the taxpayer (including the employer of the individual who performs the services) is treated as employee compensation for purposes of this section only if the amount is paid for secretarial, clerical, or similar administrative support services. In the case of an affiliated group of corporations filing a consolidated Federal income tax return, a payment by one member of the group to a second member of the group for services performed by an employee of the second member is treated as employee compensation if the services provided by the employee are provided at a time during which both members are affiliated.

(iii) De minimis costs –

(A) In general. Except as provided in paragraph (e)(4)(iii)(B) of this section, the term de minimis costs means amounts (other than employee compensation and overhead) paid in the process of investigating or otherwise pursuing a transaction if, in the aggregate, the amounts do not exceed \$ 5,000 (or such greater amount as may be set forth in published guidance). If the amounts exceed \$ 5,000 (or such greater amount as may be set forth in published guidance), none of the amounts are de minimis costs within the meaning of this paragraph (e)(4)(iii)(A). For purposes of this paragraph (e)(4)(iii), an amount paid in the form of property is valued at its fair market value at the time of the payment. In determining the amount of transaction costs paid in the process of investigating or otherwise pursuing a transaction, a taxpayer generally must account for the specific costs paid with respect to each transaction. However, a taxpayer that reasonably expects to enter into at least 25 similar transactions during the taxable year may establish a pool of similar transactions for purposes of determining the amount of transaction costs paid in the process of investigating or otherwise pursuing the transactions in the pool. Under this pooling method, the amount of transaction costs paid in the process of investigating or otherwise pursuing each transaction included in the pool is equal to the average transaction costs paid in the process of investigating or otherwise pursuing all transactions included in the pool. A taxpayer computes the average transaction costs paid in the process of investigating or otherwise pursuing all transactions included in the pool by dividing the sum of all transaction costs paid in the process of investigating or otherwise pursuing all transactions included in the pool by the number of transactions included in the pool. See paragraph (h) of this section for additional rules relating to pooling.

(B) Treatment of commissions. The term de minimis costs does not include commissions paid to facilitate the acquisition of an intangible described in paragraphs (c)(1)(i) through (v) of this section or to facilitate the creation, origination, entrance into, renewal or renegotiation of an intangible described in paragraph (d)(2)(i) of this section.

(iv) Election to capitalize. A taxpayer may elect to treat employee compensation, overhead, or de minimis costs paid in the process of investigating or otherwise pursuing a transaction as amounts that facilitate the transaction. The election is made separately for each transaction and applies to employee compensation, overhead, or de minimis costs, or to any combination thereof. For example, a taxpayer may elect to treat overhead and de minimis costs, but not employee compensation, as amounts that facilitate the transaction. A taxpayer makes the election by treating the amounts to which the election applies as amounts that facilitate the transaction in the taxpayer's 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 (e)(4)(iv) is revocable with respect to each taxable year for which made only with the consent of the Commissioner.

(5) Examples. The following examples illustrate the rules of this paragraph (e):

Example 1. Costs to facilitate. In December 2005, R corporation, a calendar year taxpayer, enters into negotiations with X corporation to lease commercial property from X for a period of 25 years. R pays A, its outside legal counsel, \$ 4,000 in December 2005 for services rendered by A during December in assisting with negotiations with X. In January 2006, R and X finalize the terms of the lease and execute the lease agreement. R pays B, another of its outside legal counsel, \$ 2,000 in January 2006 for services rendered by B during January in drafting the lease agreement. The agreement between R and X is an agreement providing R the right to use property, as described in paragraph (d)(6)(i)(A) of this section. R's payments to its outside counsel are amounts paid to facilitate the creation of the agreement. As provided in paragraph (e)(4)(iii)(A) of this section, R must aggregate its transaction costs for purposes of determining whether the transaction costs are de minimis. Because R's aggregate transaction costs exceed \$ 5,000, R's transaction costs are not de minimis costs within the meaning of paragraph (e)(4)(iii)(A) of this section. Accordingly, R must capitalize the \$ 4,000 paid to A and the \$ 2,000 paid to B under paragraph (b)(1)(v) of this section.

Example 2. Costs to facilitate. Partnership X leases its manufacturing equipment from Y corporation under a 10-year lease. During 2005, when the lease has a remaining term of 4 years, X enters into a written agreement with Z corporation, a competitor of Y, under which X agrees to lease its manufacturing equipment from Z, subject to the condition that X first successfully terminates its lease with Y. X pays Y \$ 50,000 in exchange for Y's agreement to terminate the equipment lease. Under paragraph (e)(1)(ii), X's \$ 50,000 payment does not facilitate the creation of the new lease with Z. In addition, X's \$ 50,000 payment does not terminate an agreement described in paragraph (d)(7) of this section. Accordingly, X is not required to capitalize the \$ 50,000 termination payment under this section.

Example 3. Costs to facilitate. W corporation enters into a lease agreement with X corporation under which W agrees to lease property to X for a period of 5 years. 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. Under paragraph (e)(1)(i) of this section, W's payment to its outside counsel is an amount paid to facilitate the creation of that agreement. As provided by paragraph (e)(2) of this section, W must capitalize its \$ 7,000 payment to outside counsel notwithstanding the fact that W made no payment described in paragraph (d)(6)(i) of this section.

Example 4. Costs to facilitate. U corporation, which owns a majority of the common stock of T corporation, votes its controlling interest in favor of a perpetual extension of T's charter. M, a minority shareholder in T, votes against the extension. Under applicable state law, U is required to purchase the stock of T held by M. When U and M are unable to agree on the value of M's shares, U brings an action in state court to appraise the value of M's stock interest. U pays attorney, accountant and appraisal fees of \$ 25,000 for services rendered in connection with the negotiation and litigation with M. Because U's attorney, accountant and appraisal costs help establish the purchase price of M's stock, U's \$ 25,000 payment facilitates the acquisition of stock. Accordingly, U must capitalize the \$ 25,000 payment under paragraph (b)(1)(v) of this section.

Example 5. Costs to facilitate. For several years, H corporation has provided services to J corporation whenever requested by J. H wants to enter into a multiple-year contract with J that would give H the right to provide services to J. On June 10, 2004, H starts to prepare a bid to provide services to J and pays a consultant \$ 15,000 to research potential competitors. On August 10, 2004, H raises the possibility of a multi-year contract with J. On October 10, 2004, H and J enter into a contract giving H the right to provide services to J for five years. During 2004, H pays \$ 7,000 to travel to the city in which J's offices are located to continue providing services to J under their prior arrangement and pays \$ 6,000 for travel to the city in which J's offices are located to further develop H's business relationship with J (for example, to introduce new employees, update J on current developments and take J's executives to dinner). H also pays \$ 8,000 for travel costs to meet with J to discuss and negotiate the contract. Because the contract gives H the right to provide services to J, H must capitalize amounts paid to facilitate the creation of the contract. The \$ 7,000 of travel expenses paid to provide services to J under their prior arrangement does not facilitate the creation of the contract and is not required to be capitalized, regardless of when the travel occurs. The \$ 6,000 of travel expenses paid to further develop H's business relationship with J is paid in the process of pursuing the contract (and therefore must be capitalized) only to the extent the expenses relate to travel on or after June 10, 2004 (the date H begins to prepare a bid) and before October 11, 2004 (the date after H and J enter into the contract). The \$ 8,000 of travel expenses paid to meet with J to discuss and negotiate the contract is paid in the process of pursuing the contract and must be capitalized. The \$ 15,000 of consultant fees is paid to investigate the contract and also must be capitalized.

Example 6. Costs that do not facilitate. X corporation brings a legal action against Y corporation to recover lost profits resulting from Y's alleged infringement of X's copyright. Y does not challenge X's copyright, but argues that it did not infringe upon X's copyright. X pays its outside counsel \$ 25,000 for legal services rendered in pursuing the suit against Y. Because X's title to its copyright is not in question, X's action against Y does not involve X's defense or perfection of title to intangible property. Thus, the amount paid to outside counsel does not facilitate the creation of an intangible described in paragraph (d)(9) of this section. Accordingly, X is not required to capitalize its \$ 25,000 payment under this section.

Example 7. De minimis rule. W corporation, a commercial bank, acquires a portfolio containing 100 loans from Y corporation. As part of the acquisition, W pays an independent appraiser a fee of \$ 10,000 to appraise the portfolio. The fee is an amount paid to facilitate W's acquisition of an intangible. The acquisition of the loan portfolio is a single transaction within the meaning of paragraph (e)(3) of this section. Because the amount paid to facilitate the transaction exceeds \$ 5,000, the amount is not de minimis as defined in paragraph (e)(4)(iii)(A) of this section. Accordingly, W must capitalize the \$ 10,000 fee under paragraph (b)(1)(v) of this section.

Example 8. Compensation and overhead. P corporation, a commercial bank, maintains a loan acquisition department whose sole function is to acquire loans from other financial institutions. As provided in paragraph (e)(4)(i) of this section, P is not required to capitalize any portion of the compensation paid to the employees in its loan acquisition department or any portion of its overhead allocable to the loan acquisition department.

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