

Retirement Planning

A Quick Tax Guide

Course Description

The need for effective retirement planning has never been greater. This course is essential for participants who wish to attain a comfortable retirement for themselves and their clients by maximizing tax saving strategies. Retirement income needs are calculated; net after tax Social Security benefits are determined; and distribution options from IRAs and retirement plans are explored. Special consideration is given to the tax treatment of the home and business on retirement. Buy-sell agreements are discussed and eldercare planning is examined.

Completion Deadline & Exam: This course, including the examination, must be completed within one year of the date of purchase. In addition, unless otherwise indicated, no correct or incorrect feedback for any exam question will be provided.

Course Level: Overview. This program is appropriate for professionals at all organizational levels.

CPE Credits: 17 (CPA, EA)

Category: Taxation

Prerequisite: None.

Advanced Preparation: None

Course Learning Objectives

Chapter 1: How Much Do You Need To Retire?

1. Recognize the importance of personal retirement maps to suit client objectives & lifestyles and summarize the basic guidelines of retirement planning, including common pitfalls and misconceptions of retirement.
2. Determine retirement using the major levels of retirement and key questions that have financial and personal ramifications.
3. Identify retirement costs and income needs of clients based on their current budget, recognize tax savings strategies and identify guidelines when purchasing investment assets.

Chapter 2: Social Security Benefits & Retirement Planning

1. Determine how Social Security funds are assessed and then paid, specify the system's mechanics, and select qualified Social Security participants noting their benefit eligibility.
2. Identify the requirements to receive Social Security retirement benefits and determine client's retirement benefits following a multi-step calculation process.
3. Recognize Social Security taxes, their tax rates and covered earnings allowing better retirement planning.
4. Specify the eligibility requirements of Social Security disability benefits and survivors' benefits, and determine what constitutes Medicare Part A and Medicare Part B noting qualifications.

Chapter 3: Retirement Plans

1. Identify nonqualified and qualified deferred compensation plans noting their benefits and contributions limits and recognize the current and deferred advantages and disadvantages of corporate plans including fiduciary responsibilities and prohibited transactions.
2. Specify the requirements of the basic forms of qualified pension plans.
3. Determine the differences between defined contribution and defined benefit retirement plans and specify several types of defined contribution plans noting their impact on retirement benefits.
4. Recognize self-employed plans from qualified plans for other business types and owners.
5. Identify the requirements of IRAs, SEPs, and SIMPLEs, and tax-free Roth IRA distributions noting strategies to maximize plan benefits.

Chapter 4: Distributions from Retirement Plans

1. Identify popular ways to receive distributions from a retirement plan or an IRA, specify types of annuities noting their effect on how and when participants receive payments and determine the tax on annuity payments under the general rule or the simplified general rule.
2. Determine what constitutes a lump-sum distribution permitting clients to receive special tax treatment on such distributions.
3. Recognize the key components of rollovers that can be used to reinvest cash or other assets without including the amount in income.
4. Specify the tax consequences of taking premature distributions noting how to avoid the 10% penalty.
5. Identify the minimum distribution rules and ways to avoid the 50% penalty associated with either taking smaller distributions than required or with taking distributions after the required beginning date for minimum distributions.

Chapter 5: Nonqualified Plans

1. Recognize the postponement of income with a nonqualified plan by:
 - a. Identifying nonqualified plan advantages including ways to design the plans and specifying the IRS's position on such arrangements noting the impact of constructive receipt and economic benefit concepts;
 - b. Specifying deferred compensation patterns set forth in R.R. 60-31 noting the taxability of each; and
 - c. Determining unfunded and funded plans noting the use of company assets or bookkeeping accounts to avoid employee taxation.
2. Identify the setup of a segregated asset plan where the account is not subject to the claims of the employer's creditors and still avoids employee taxation and specify the tax consequences of establishing a nonqualified plan.

Chapter 6: Life Insurance, Annuities & Buy-sell Agreement

1. Specify reasons to purchase life insurance and the parties with rights in a life insurance policy.
2. Recognize the tax treatment of life insurance proceeds by:
 - a. Identifying the tax treatment of premiums and lifetime benefits noting several exceptions to the transfer for value rule and specifying variables that influence whether life insurance is taxable for federal estate tax purposes; and
 - b. Determining the gift tax associated with transfers of life insurance policies.
3. Identify the pros and cons of types of life insurance policies to help clients choose a suitable policy.
4. Specify the reasons for using an irrevocable life insurance trust in an estate plan identifying trust considerations and the differences between deferred and private annuities.
5. Determine what constitutes entity purchase and cross purchase buy-sell agreements noting tax and legal advantages.

Chapter 7: Home Sales & Moving Expenses

1. Determine the relationship between home sales and the capital gains rates and specify the rate baskets created by the capital gain provisions noting the tax treatment of capital assets in each category.
2. Recognize the key elements and application of the §121 home sale exclusion and identify safe harbor regulations associated with the home sale exclusion.
3. Identify when a taxpayer meets distance and time tests for deductible moving expenses under §217.

Chapter 8: Estate Planning

1. Determine what constitutes estate planning for clients by:
 - a. Identifying elements of estate tax planning that have remained unchanged by recent legislation;
 - b. Recognizing the unlimited marital deduction and its effect on the gross estate of the value of property; and
 - c. Specifying the applicable exclusion amounts for various years of death.
2. Identify the concepts of “stepped-up basis” and “modified carryover basis” for estate tax purposes.
3. Specify basic estate-planning goals, and recognize the benefits and drawbacks of the primary dispositive plans.
4. Identify various types of estate trusts and family documents that every taxpayer should consider, and determine the advantages and disadvantages of the former private annuity format.