

final regulations provide that if a requesting spouse receives relief for an item, the rules provided by section 879(a) will govern the treatment of the item. The item-by-item approach adopted in the final regulations is consistent with the statutory language in section 66(c) that states "such item of community income shall be included in the gross income of the other spouse (and not in the gross income of the individual)." (Emphasis added.)

Traditionally, section 66(c) provided relief from liability resulting only from items of income, unlike former section 6013(e) and section 6015. The final regulations expand equitable relief under § 1.66-4(b) to include relief for underpayments of tax or any deficiency, including those arising from disallowed deductions or credits. This is consistent with the equitable relief provision in section 66(c).

Special Analyses

It has been determined that these final regulations are not a significant regulatory action as defined in Executive Order 12866. Therefore, a regulatory assessment is not required. It has also been determined that section 553(b) of the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. chapter 5) does not apply to the regulations, and because the regulations do not impose a collection of information on small entities, the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. chapter 6) does not apply.

Drafting Information

The principal author of the regulations is Robin M. Tuczak of the Office of Associate Chief Counsel (Procedure and Administration), Administrative Provisions and Judicial Practice Division.

List of Subjects

26 CFR Part 1

Income taxes, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

26 CFR Part 602

Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

Adoption of Amendments to the Regulations

Accordingly, 26 CFR parts 1 and 602 are amended as follows:

PART 1—INCOME TAXES

■ **Paragraph 1.** The authority citation for part 1 is amended by adding an entry in numerical order to the table to read in part as follows:

Authority: 26 U.S.C. 7805 * * *

Section 1.66-4 also issued under 26 U.S.C. 66(c). * * *

■ **Par. 2.** Sections 1.66-1 through 1.66-5 are added to read as follows:

§ 1.66-1 Treatment of community income.

(a) *In general.* Married individuals domiciled in a community property state who do not elect to file a joint individual Federal income tax return under section 6013 generally must report half of the total community income earned by the spouses during the taxable year except at times when one of the following exceptions applies:

(1) The spouses live apart and meet the qualifications of § 1.66-2.

(2) The Secretary denies a spouse the Federal income tax benefits resulting from community property law under § 1.66-3, because that spouse acted as if solely entitled to the income and failed to notify his or her spouse of the nature and amount of the income prior to the due date for the filing of his or her spouse's return.

(3) A requesting spouse qualifies for traditional relief from the Federal income tax liability resulting from the operation of community property law under § 1.66-4(a).

(4) A requesting spouse qualifies for equitable relief from the Federal income tax liability resulting from the operation of community property law under § 1.66-4(b).

(b) *Applicability.* (1) The rules of this section apply only to community income, as defined by state law. The rules of this section do not apply to income that is not community income. Thus, the rules of this section do not apply to income from property that was formerly community property, but in accordance with state law, has ceased to be community property, becoming, *e.g.*, separate property or property held by joint tenancy or tenancy in common.

(2) When taxpayers report income under paragraph (a) of this section, *all* community income for the calendar year is treated in accordance with the rules provided by section 879(a). Unlike the other provisions under section 66, section 66(a) does not permit inclusion on an item-by-item basis.

(c) *Transferee liability.* The provisions of section 66 do not negate liability that arises under the operation of other laws. Therefore, a spouse who is not subject to Federal income tax on community income may nevertheless remain liable for the unpaid tax (including additions to tax, penalties, and interest) to the extent provided by Federal or state transferee liability or property laws (other than community property laws). For the rules regarding the liability of

transferees, see sections 6901 through 6904 and the regulations thereunder.

§ 1.66-2 Treatment of community income where spouses live apart.

(a) Community income of spouses domiciled in a community property state will be treated in accordance with the rules provided by section 879(a) if all of the following requirements are satisfied—

(1) The spouses are married to each other at any time during the calendar year;

(2) The spouses live apart at all times during the calendar year;

(3) The spouses do not file a joint return with each other for a taxable year beginning or ending in the calendar year;

(4) One or both spouses have earned income that is community income for the calendar year; and

(5) No portion of such earned income is transferred (directly or indirectly) between such spouses before the close of the calendar year.

(b) *Living apart.* For purposes of this section, living apart requires that spouses maintain separate residences. Spouses who maintain separate residences due to temporary absences are not considered to be living apart. Spouses who are not members of the same household under § 1.6015-3(b) are considered to be living apart for purposes of this section.

(c) *Transferred income.* For purposes of this section, transferred income does not include a *de minimis* amount of earned income that is transferred between the spouses. In addition, any amount of earned income transferred for the benefit of the spouses' child will not be treated as an indirect transfer to one spouse. Additionally, income transferred between spouses is presumed to be a transfer of earned income. This presumption is rebuttable.

(d) *Examples.* The following examples illustrate the rules of this section:

Example 1. Living apart. H and W are married, domiciled in State A, a community property state, and have lived apart the entire year of 2002. W, who is in the Army, was stationed in Korea for the entire calendar year. During their separation, W intended to return home to H, and H intended to live with W upon W's return. H and W do not file a joint return for taxable year 2002. H and W may not report their income under this section because a temporary absence due to military service is not living apart as contemplated under this section.

Example 2. Transfer of earned income—de minimis exception. H and W are married, domiciled in State B, a community property state, and have lived apart the entire year of 2002. H and W are estranged and intend to live apart indefinitely. H and W do not file