How a Solo 401(k) Plan Works

INDIVIDUAL AS EMPLOYER



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- Makes contributions up to allowable limits.¹
- Contributions are tax deductible to the business.²
- Plan may provide for participant loans.
- Nondiscrimination rules may apply if other employees are hired.³

SOLO 401(k) PLAN

- Employer contributions are not currently taxable to employee and earnings accumulate tax deferred.
- Most plans are self-directed (employee controls investments).
- Investment risk remains on employee.

- Elects to defer a portion of salary or bonus.
- Employee's elective contributions are limited to \$23,500⁴ per year (2025).
- Amounts deferred are subject to FICA and FUTA taxes but not current income tax.

EARLY WITHDRAWAL

- A 10% penalty generally applies if withdrawals are made before age 59½.
- Some exceptions to the 10% penalty are available.
- Employee elective contributions can be withdrawn for financial hardship.⁵

RETIREMENT

- Distributions must begin by specified date.
- Funds may be distributed as a lump sum or as periodic payments.
- Earnings + deductible contributions are taxed as ordinary income in the year received.

DEATH

- Value of account is included in owner's gross estate.
- Proceeds can pass to beneficiaries with payments over varying time periods.
- Income and estate taxes can severely reduce funds left to nonspousal beneficiaries.

¹ For 2025, the allocation total of employer contributions, forfeitures and employee deferrals to a participant's account may not exceed the lesser of 100% of compensation or \$70,000.

² The total deduction is limited to 25% of covered payroll.

³ Plans covering only the business owner (or the owner and spouse) effectively sidestep the nondiscrimination issue.

⁴ In 2025, for those age 50 and older, additional "catch-up" contributions of \$7,500 may be made.

⁵ If provided for by the plan; specific requirements may apply.

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