ASPIRIANT

A Thoughtful Approach to Liquidity at SpaceX: Planning Through a Tender Offer or IPO

Build from where you're going, not just where you are today.

Moments like this are exciting, validating and uncertain. Sometimes all at once.

If you work at SpaceX, your career and financial life may be closely tied to the company you're helping build. A tender offer or IPO could create opportunities for liquidity and leave you wondering how to handle taxes, concentration risk and long-term planning.

We advise current and former SpaceX employees and professionals at many AI and tech companies navigating similar decisions.

You may feel confident about the upside.

You may feel uncertain about the trade-offs.

You may feel both at the same time.

That's normal.

You build systems that must perform under uncertainty. Financial decisions during liquidity events deserve the same level of care: clear assumptions, thoughtful sequencing and decisions that hold up over time.

Liquidity can change your balance sheet overnight.

But it doesn't need to change your sense of direction.

Leading up to the liquidity event

Tax law, estate structures and capital markets are governed by rules and deadlines that don't flex easily. Some decisions are not easily reversed.

That's why it helps to slow down before speeding up.

The timing of an IPO may affect when and how you are able to access liquidity. For example, IPO lock-up periods may delay the ability to sell shares and reduce flexibility in the near term.

Before participating in a tender or reacting to a liquidity event, it can be helpful to ask:

- What are my actual liquidity needs over the next 1–3 years?
- How concentrated is my overall balance sheet today?
- How might taxes differ across various sale scenarios?
- What happens if valuation rises? What if it falls?
- What are the nature of my shares (common stock, options, ESPP shares, etc.)
- Am I modeling short-term versus long-term capital gains?
- What risks should I address before liquidity occurs?

Planning early helps ensure decisions are made intentionally rather than reactively.

Understanding the type of equity you may hold

- Common stock
- Non-qualified stock options (NQSOs)
- Incentive stock options (ISOs)
- Restricted stock units (RSUs)
- Employee stock purchase plan shares

Different forms of equity may affect timing, taxes, liquidity and concentration risk in other ways.

Questions we hear most often

- What are the common mistakes in a IPO moment?
- Should I sell, and if so, how much?
- Can I hedge my SpaceX holdings in case the price drops before I sell?
- Will I be able to sell as much as I want or only a portion?
- How concentrated is too concentrated?
- What will my tax bill look like?
- What if valuations rise or fall after I sell?
- How do I protect what I've built?

Liquidity planning often starts with tactical decisions. Over time, it may expand into broader conversations about independence, impact and long-term design.

Four planning areas for SpaceX employees to consider

1. Diversification and concentration risk

When your income, unvested equity and personal portfolio are tied to the same company, concentration risk can build quietly. Liquidity may create an opportunity to reduce that exposure thoughtfully, without abandoning the long-term vision you believe in.

In certain situations, more advanced, tax-aware long-short strategies can be used to help reduce concentrated positions while managing the tax impact over time.

Explore how this approach works

2. Tax planning and timing

Taxes are rarely emotional, but the bill can feel that way.

Large capital gains may arise in an IPO. Modeling that exposure in advance can help bring clarity to important decisions.

At the same time, not all equity is treated the same. For many employees, newer equity grants in the form of RSUs may be taxed as ordinary income when a liquidity event occurs, often accompanied by a required sell-to-cover to meet withholding obligations. The distinction between short-term and long-term capital gains can also meaningfully impact outcomes. Planning before liquidity often creates more flexibility than reacting after the fact.

In certain cases, advanced tax-loss harvesting strategies can be implemented ahead of liquidity to help offset or defer capital gains, allowing more capital to remain invested and working toward long-term goals.

3. Risk management

Before liquidity, protect the balance sheet you already have. It's also worth keeping in mind that increased wealth can bring greater visibility and potential liability exposure.

- Adequate umbrella liability coverage
- Asset protection considerations
- Evaluating ownership structures for outside investments

4. Foundational estate planning

Even early in your career, clarity matters. It's less about complexity and more about making sure your intentions, and the people you care about, are protected. Advanced strategies may be appropriate at higher net worth levels, but foundational planning is often the right first step.

- Avoid default probate outcomes
- Ensure beneficiary designations and spousal consent are aligned
- Distinguish between foundational planning and more advanced strategies

A conversation, when you're ready

If you would like to think through your equity, tax exposure or concentration risk before a potential liquidity event, we're here to talk it through. Our role is not to rush you into a decision, but to help you move forward with clarity and confidence.

Let's get started

Disclosure: This material is for informational purposes only and should not be considered investment, tax, or legal advice. Individual circumstances vary.