

offset would not be in the best interests of the United States, or would otherwise be contrary to law.

(g) *Multiple debts.* When two or more creditor agencies are seeking offsets from payments made to the same person, or when two or more debts are owed to a single creditor agency, the Commerce entity that has been asked to offset the payments may determine the order in which the debts will be collected or whether one or more debts should be collected by offset simultaneously.

(h) *Priority of debts owed to Commerce entity.* For purposes of this section, debts owed to a Commerce entity generally take precedence over debts owed to other agencies. The Commerce entity that has been asked to offset the payments may determine whether to pay debts owed to other agencies before paying a debt owed to a Commerce entity. The Commerce entity that has been asked to offset the payments will determine the order in which the debts will be collected based on the best interests of the United States.

§ 19.21 What does a Commerce entity do upon receipt of a request to offset the salary of a Commerce entity employee to collect a debt owed by the employee to another Federal agency?

(a) *Notice to the Commerce employee.* When a Commerce entity receives proper certification of a debt owed by one of its employees, the Commerce entity will begin deductions from the employee's pay at the next officially established pay interval. The Commerce entity will send a written notice to the employee indicating that a certified debt claim has been received from the creditor agency, the amount of the debt claimed to be owed by the creditor agency, the date deductions from salary will begin, and the amount of such deductions.

(b) *Amount of deductions from Commerce employee's salary.* The amount deducted under § 19.20(b) of this Part will be the lesser of the amount of the debt certified by the creditor agency or an amount up to 15% of the debtor's disposable pay. Deductions shall continue until the Commerce entity knows that the debt is paid in full or until otherwise instructed by the creditor agency.

Alternatively, the amount offset may be an amount agreed upon, in writing, by the debtor and the creditor agency. See § 19.12(g) (salary offset process).

(c) *When the debtor is no longer employed by the Commerce entity—(1) Offset of final and subsequent payments.* If a Commerce entity employee retires or resigns or if his or her employment ends before collection of the debt is complete, the Commerce entity will continue to offset, under 31 U.S.C. 3716, up to 100% of an employee's subsequent payments until the debt is paid or otherwise resolved. Such payments include a debtor's final salary payment, lump-sum leave payment, and other payments payable to the debtor by the Commerce entity. See 31 U.S.C. 3716 and 5 CFR 550.1104(1) and 550.1104(m).

(2) *Notice to the creditor agency.* If the employee is separated from the Commerce entity before the debt is paid in full, the Commerce entity will certify to the creditor agency the total amount of its collection. If the Commerce entity is aware that the employee is entitled to payments from the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund, Federal Employee Retirement System, or other similar payments, the Commerce entity will provide written notice to the agency making such payments that the debtor owes a debt (including the amount) and that the provisions of 5 CFR 550.1109 have been fully complied with. The creditor agency is responsible for submitting a certified claim to the agency responsible for making such payments before collection may begin. Generally, creditor agencies will collect such monies through the Treasury Offset Program as described in § 19.9(c) of this Part.

(3) *Notice to the debtor.* The Commerce entity will provide to the debtor a copy of any notices sent to the creditor agency under paragraph (c)(2) of this section.

(d) *When the debtor transfers to another Federal agency—(1) Notice to the creditor agency.* If the debtor transfers to another Federal agency before the debt is paid in full, the Commerce entity will notify the creditor agency and

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will certify the total amount of its collection on the debt. The Commerce entity will provide a copy of the certification to the creditor agency. The creditor agency is responsible for submitting a certified claim to the debtor's new employing agency before collection may begin.

(2) *Notice to the debtor.* The Commerce entity will provide to the debtor a copy of any notices and certifications sent to the creditor agency under paragraph (d)(1) of this section.

(e) *Request for hearing official.* A Commerce entity will provide a hearing official upon the creditor agency's request with respect to a Commerce entity employee. See 5 CFR 550.1107(a).

PART 20—NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF AGE IN PROGRAMS OR ACTIVITIES RECEIVING FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

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AUTHORITY: Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, 42 U.S.C. sec. 6101 *et seq.* and the government-wide regulations implementing the Act, 45 CFR Part 90.

SOURCE: 51 FR 28926, Aug. 13, 1986, unless otherwise noted.

EDITORIAL NOTE: Nomenclature changes to part 20 appear at 68 FR 51355, Aug. 26, 2003.

Subpart A—General

§20.1 The purpose of DOC's age discrimination regulations.

The purpose of these regulations is to set out DOC's policies and procedures under the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and the general age discrimination regulations at 45 CFR Part 90. The Act and the general regulations prohibit discrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance. The Act and the general regulations permit federally assisted programs or activities, and recipients of Federal funds, to continue to use age distinctions and factors other than age which meet the requirements of the Act and its implementing regulations.

§20.2 Programs or activities to which these regulations apply.

(a) The Act and these regulations apply to each DOC recipient and to each program or activity operated by the recipient which receives Federal financial assistance provided by any entity of DOC.

(b) The Act and these regulations do not apply to:

(1) An age distinction contained in that part of a Federal, State, or local statute or ordinance adopted by an elected, general purpose legislative body which:

(i) Provides benefits or assistance to persons based on age; or

(ii) Establishes criteria for participation in age-related terms; or

(iii) Describes intended beneficiaries or target groups in age-related terms.

(2) Any employment practice or any employer, employment agency, labor