

(c)(1) The Secretary of the Treasury may make payments from the Account solely to reimburse agencies for qualified expenses. For agencies with franchise funds, such payments may be credited to subaccounts designated for debt collection.

(2) For purposes of this section, the term “qualified expenses” means expenditures for the improvement of credit management, debt collection, and debt recovery activities, including—

- (A) account servicing (including cross-servicing under section 3711(g) of this title),
- (B) automatic data processing equipment acquisitions,
- (C) delinquent debt collection,
- (D) measures to minimize delinquent debt,
- (E) sales of delinquent debt,
- (F) asset disposition, and
- (G) training of personnel involved in credit and debt management.

(3)(A) Amounts transferred to the Account shall be available to the Secretary of the Treasury for purposes of this section to the extent and in amounts provided in advance in appropriations Acts.

(B) As soon as practicable after the end of the third fiscal year after which amounts transferred are first available pursuant to this section, and every 3 years thereafter, any uncommitted balance in the Account shall be transferred to the general fund of the Treasury as miscellaneous receipts.

(d) For direct loans and loan guarantee programs subject to title V of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, amounts credited in accordance with subsection (c) shall be considered administrative costs.

(e) The Secretary of the Treasury shall prescribe such rules, regulations, and procedures as the Secretary considers necessary or appropriate to carry out the purposes of this section.

(Added Pub. L. 104-134, title III, §31001(t)(1), Apr. 26, 1996, 110 Stat. 1321-373.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Congressional Budget Act of 1974, referred to in subsec. (d), is titles I through IX of Pub. L. 93-344, July 12, 1974, 88 Stat. 297, as amended. Title V of the Act, known as the Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990, is classified generally to subchapter III (§661 et seq.) of chapter 17A of Title 2, The Congress. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 621 of Title 2 and Tables.

§ 3720D. Garnishment

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of State law, the head of an executive, judicial, or legislative agency that administers a program that gives rise to a delinquent nontax debt owed to the United States by an individual may in accordance with this section garnish the disposable pay of the individual to collect the amount owed, if the individual is not currently making required repayment in accordance with any agreement between the agency head and the individual.

(b) In carrying out any garnishment of disposable pay of an individual under subsection (a), the head of an executive, judicial, or legislative agency shall comply with the following requirements:

(1) The amount deducted under this section for any pay period may not exceed 15 percent of disposable pay, except that a greater percentage may be deducted with the written consent of the individual.

(2) The individual shall be provided written notice, sent by mail to the individual’s last known address, a minimum of 30 days prior to the initiation of proceedings, from the head of the executive, judicial, or legislative agency, informing the individual of—

- (A) the nature and amount of the debt to be collected;
- (B) the intention of the agency to initiate proceedings to collect the debt through deductions from pay; and
- (C) an explanation of the rights of the individual under this section.

(3) The individual shall be provided an opportunity to inspect and copy records relating to the debt.

(4) The individual shall be provided an opportunity to enter into a written agreement with the executive, judicial, or legislative agency, under terms agreeable to the head of the agency, to establish a schedule for repayment of the debt.

(5) The individual shall be provided an opportunity for a hearing in accordance with subsection (c) on the determination of the head of the executive, judicial, or legislative agency concerning—

- (A) the existence or the amount of the debt, and
- (B) in the case of an individual whose repayment schedule is established other than by a written agreement pursuant to paragraph (4), the terms of the repayment schedule.

(6) If the individual has been reemployed within 12 months after having been involuntarily separated from employment, no amount may be deducted from the disposable pay of the individual until the individual has been reemployed continuously for at least 12 months.

(c)(1) A hearing under subsection (b)(5) shall be provided prior to issuance of a garnishment order if the individual, on or before the 15th day following the mailing of the notice described in subsection (b)(2), and in accordance with such procedures as the head of the executive, judicial, or legislative agency may prescribe, files a petition requesting such a hearing.

(2) If the individual does not file a petition requesting a hearing prior to such date, the head of the agency shall provide the individual a hearing under subsection (a)(5)¹ upon request, but such hearing need not be provided prior to issuance of a garnishment order.

(3) The hearing official shall issue a final decision at the earliest practicable date, but not later than 60 days after the filing of the petition requesting the hearing.

(4) The notice to the employer of the withholding order shall contain only such information as may be necessary for the employer to comply with the withholding order.

(e)(1) An employer may not discharge from employment, refuse to employ, or take discipli-

¹ So in original. Probably should be subsection “(b)(5)”.

nary action against an individual subject to wage withholding in accordance with this section by reason of the fact that the individual's wages have been subject to garnishment under this section, and such individual may sue in a State or Federal court of competent jurisdiction any employer who takes such action.

(2) The court shall award attorneys' fees to a prevailing employee and, in its discretion, may order reinstatement of the individual, award punitive damages and back pay to the employee, or order such other remedy as may be reasonably necessary.

(f)(1) The employer of an individual—

(A) shall pay to the head of an executive, judicial, or legislative agency as directed in a withholding order issued in an action under this section with respect to the individual, and

(B) shall be liable for any amount that the employer fails to withhold from wages due an employee following receipt by such employer of notice of the withholding order, plus attorneys' fees, costs, and, in the court's discretion, punitive damages.

(2)(A) The head of an executive, judicial, or legislative agency may sue an employer in a State or Federal court of competent jurisdiction to recover amounts for which the employer is liable under paragraph (1)(B).

(B) A suit under this paragraph may not be filed before the termination of the collection action, unless earlier filing is necessary to avoid expiration of any applicable statute of limitations period.

(3) Notwithstanding paragraphs (1) and (2), an employer shall not be required to vary its normal pay and disbursement cycles in order to comply with this subsection.

(g) For the purpose of this section, the term "disposable pay" means that part of the compensation of any individual from an employer remaining after the deduction of any amounts required by any other law to be withheld.

(h) The Secretary of the Treasury shall issue regulations to implement this section.

(Added Pub. L. 104-134, title III, §31001(o)(1), Apr. 26, 1996, 110 Stat. 1321-369.)

§ 3720E. Dissemination of information regarding identity of delinquent debtors

(a) The head of any agency may, with the review of the Secretary of the Treasury, for the purpose of collecting any delinquent nontax debt owed by any person, publish or otherwise publicly disseminate information regarding the identity of the person and the existence of the nontax debt.

(b)(1) The Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget and the heads of other appropriate Federal agencies, shall issue regulations establishing procedures and requirements the Secretary considers appropriate to carry out this section.

(2) Regulations under this subsection shall include—

(A) standards for disseminating information that maximize collections of delinquent nontax debts, by directing actions under this section toward delinquent debtors that have

assets or income sufficient to pay their delinquent nontax debt;

(B) procedures and requirements that prevent dissemination of information under this section regarding persons who have not had an opportunity to verify, contest, and compromise their nontax debt in accordance with this subchapter; and

(C) procedures to ensure that persons are not incorrectly identified pursuant to this section.

(Added Pub. L. 104-134, title III, §31001(r)(1), Apr. 26, 1996, 110 Stat. 1321-372.)

SUBCHAPTER III—CLAIMS AGAINST THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

§ 3721. Claims of personnel of agencies and the District of Columbia government for personal property damage or loss

(a) In this section—

(1) "agency" does not include a nonappropriated fund activity or a contractor with the United States Government.

(2) "head of an agency" means—

(A) for a military department, the Secretary of the military department;

(B) for the Department of Defense (except the military departments), the Secretary of Defense; and

(C) for another agency, the head of the agency.

(3) "settle" means consider, determine, adjust, and dispose of a claim by disallowance or by complete or partial allowance.

(b)(1) The head of an agency may settle and pay not more than \$40,000 for a claim against the Government made by a member of the uniformed services under the jurisdiction of the agency or by an officer or employee of the agency for damage to, or loss of, personal property incident to service. If, however, the claim arose from an emergency evacuation or from extraordinary circumstances, the amount settled and paid under the authority of the preceding sentence may exceed \$40,000, but may not exceed \$100,000. A claim allowed under this subsection may be paid in money or the personal property replaced in kind.

(2) The Secretary of State may waive the settlement and payment limitation referred to in paragraph (1) for claims for damage or loss by United States Government personnel under the jurisdiction of a chief of mission in a foreign country if such claims arise in circumstances where there is in effect a departure from the country authorized or ordered under circumstances described in section 5522(a) of title 5, if the Secretary determines that there exists exceptional circumstances that warrant such a waiver.

(c) On paying a claim under this section, the Government is subrogated for the amount of the payment to a right or claim that the claimant may have against a foreign country for the damage or loss for which the Government made the payment.

(d) The Mayor of the District of Columbia may settle and pay a claim against the District of Columbia government made by an officer or employee of the District of Columbia government