

## Surface Transportation Board

## § 1017.9

this part, whichever is applicable. However, failure to file within the requisite time period set out in §1017.4(b)(8) or §1017.4(c)(9) of this part whichever is applicable, will not result in denial of a hearing or in immediate offset, if the Administrative Law Judge excuses the late filing if the employee can show that the delay was because of circumstances beyond his/her control or because of failure to receive notice of the filing deadline.

(b) Is scheduled to appear and fails to appear at the hearing without good cause.

### § 1017.7 Written decision following hearing.

(a) Written decisions provided after a request for a hearing will include:

(1) A statement of the facts presented to support the nature and origin of the alleged debt;

(2) The Administrative Law Judge's analysis, findings, and conclusions, in light of the hearing, concerning the employee's or the Board's grounds;

(3) The amount and validity of the alleged debt; and

(4) The repayment schedule (including percentage), if applicable.

(b) The Administrative Law Judge's decision does not preclude an employee from requesting a waiver of a salary payment under 5 U.S.C. 5584, 10 U.S.C. 2774, or 32 U.S.C. 716, or in any way questioning the amount or validity of a debt by submitting a subsequent claim to GAO in accordance with procedures prescribed by GAO.

### § 1017.8 Exception to entitlement to notice, hearing, written responses and final decisions.

The Board shall except from the provisions of §§1017.4 through 1017.7 any adjustment to pay arising out of an employee's election of coverage or a change in coverage under a Federal benefits program, requiring periodic deductions from pay, if the amount to be recovered was accumulated over four pay periods or less.

### § 1017.9 Coordinating offset with another Federal agency.

(a) *The Board as creditor agency.* When the Chief, Section of Financial Services, determines that an employee of

another Federal agency owes a delinquent debt to the Board, he/she shall:

(1) Arrange for a hearing upon proper petitioning by the employee;

(2) Certify in writing to the other Federal agency that the employee owes the debt, the amount and basis of the debt, the date on which payment is due, the date the Government's right to collect the debt accrued, that the Board's regulations for administrative offset have been approved by the Office of Personnel Management, and that the provisions of 4 CFR 102.3(f) have been fully complied with;

(3) If collection must be made in installments, advise the paying agency of the amount or percentage of disposable pay to be collected in each installment;

(4) Advise the paying agency of any action taken under 5 U.S.C. 5514(a);

(5) If the employee is in the process of separating, the Board must submit its debt claim to the paying agency as provided in this part. The paying agency must certify any amounts already collected, notify the employee, and send a copy of the certification and notice of the employee's separation to the creditor agency—if the paying agency is aware that the employee is entitled to money from the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund, it must certify to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) that:

(i) The debtor owes the U.S. a debt, including the amount of that debt;

(ii) The Board has complied with the applicable statutes, regulations, and procedures of OPM; and

(iii) The Board has complied with the requirements of 4 CFR 102.3, including any hearing or review; and

(6) If the employee has already separated and all payments due from the paying agency have been paid, the Chief, Section of Financial Services, may request from OPM, unless otherwise prohibited, that money payable to the employee from the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund or other similar funds be collected by administrative offset and provide the certification described in paragraph (a)(5) of this section.

(b) *The Board as paying agency.* (1) Upon receipt of a properly certified debt claim from another agency, deductions will be scheduled to begin at

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the next established pay interval. The employee must receive written notice that the Board has received a certified debt claim from the creditor agency, the amount of the debt, the date administrative offset will begin, and the amount of the deduction(s). The Board shall not review the merits of the creditor agency's determination of the validity or the amount of the certified claim.

(2) When the Board receives an incomplete debt from another (creditor) agency, the Board must return the debt claim with a notice that procedures under 5 U.S.C. 5514 and 5 CFR 550.1109 must be followed and a properly certified debt claim received before action will be taken to collect from the employee's current pay account.

(3) If the employee transfers to another agency after the creditor agency has submitted its debt claim to the Board and before the debt is fully collected, the Board must certify the total amount collected to the creditor agency, along with notice of the transfer, and furnish a copy of same to the employee.

[56 FR 32333, July 16, 1991, as amended at 64 FR 53267, Oct. 1, 1999; 81 FR 8851, Feb. 23, 2016]

## § 1017.10 Procedures for administrative offset.

(a) Debts will be collected in one lump sum where possible. If the employee is financially unable to pay in one lump sum, collection shall be made in installments.

(b) Debts shall be collected by deduction at officially established pay intervals from an employee's current pay account, unless alternative arrangements for repayment are made.

(c) Installment deductions will be made over a period not greater than the anticipated period of employment. The size of installment deductions must bear a reasonable relationship to the size of the debt and the employee's ability to pay. The deduction for the pay intervals for any period shall not exceed 15 percent of disposable pay, unless the employee has agreed in writing to a deduction of a greater amount.

(d) Unliquidated debts may be offset against any financial payment due to a separated employee (including, but not

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limited to, final salary payment or lump-sum payment for leave).

## § 1017.11 Refunds.

(a) The Board shall promptly refund any amounts deducted to satisfy debts owed to it when the debt is waived, found not owed to the Board, or when directed by an administrative or judicial order.

(b) A creditor agency will promptly return any amounts deducted by the Board to satisfy debts owed to a creditor agency when the debt is waived, found not owed, or when directed by an administrative or judicial order.

(c) Unless required by law, refunds under this subsection shall not bear interest.

## § 1017.12 Statute of limitations.

If a debt has been outstanding for more than 10 years after the agency's right to collect the debt first accrued, the agency may not collect by salary offset unless facts material to the Government's right to collect were not known and could not reasonably have been known by the official or officials who were charged with the responsibility for discovery and collection of such debts.

## § 1017.13 Nonwaiver of rights.

An employee's involuntary payment of all or any part of a debt collected under these regulations will not be construed as a waiver of any rights that employee may have under 5 U.S.C. 5514 or any other provision of law.

## § 1017.14 Interest, penalties, and administrative costs.

(a) The rate of interest assessed shall be the rate of the current value of funds to the U.S. Treasury (i.e., the Treasury tax and loan account rate), as prescribed and published by the Secretary of the Treasury in the FEDERAL REGISTER and the Treasury Financial Manual Bulletins. A higher rate of interest can be assessed if the Board can reasonably determine that a higher rate is necessary to protect the interests of the United States. The rate of interest, as initially assessed, shall remain fixed for the duration of the indebtedness, except where a debtor has defaulted on a repayment agreement