

## § 180.805

the Federal Government under the Internal Revenue Code) owed to any Federal agency or instrumentality, provided the debt is uncontested by the debtor or, if contested, provided that the debtor's legal and administrative remedies have been exhausted;

(4) Violation of a material provision of a voluntary exclusion agreement entered into under §180.640 or of any settlement of a debarment or suspension action; or

(5) Violation of the provisions of the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (41 U.S.C. 701); or

(d) Any other cause of so serious or compelling a nature that it affects your present responsibility.

### **§ 180.805 What notice does the debarring official give me if I am proposed for debarment?**

After consideration of the causes in §180.800, if the debarring official proposes to debar you, the official sends you a Notice of Proposed Debarment, pursuant to §180.615, advising you—

(a) That the debarring official is considering debarring you;

(b) Of the reasons for proposing to debar you in terms sufficient to put you on notice of the conduct or transactions upon which the proposed debarment is based;

(c) Of the cause(s) under §180.800 upon which the debarring official relied for proposing your debarment;

(d) Of the applicable provisions of this subpart, Subpart F of this part, and any other agency procedures governing debarment; and

(e) Of the governmentwide effect of a debarment from procurement and non-procurement programs and activities.

### **§ 180.810 When does a debarment take effect?**

Unlike suspension, a debarment is not effective until the debarring official issues a decision. The debarring official does not issue a decision until the respondent has had an opportunity to contest the proposed debarment.

### **§ 180.815 How may I contest a proposed debarment?**

If you as a respondent wish to contest a proposed debarment, you or your representative must provide the debar-

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ring official with information in opposition to the proposed debarment. You may do this orally or in writing, but any information provided orally that you consider important must also be submitted in writing for the official record.

### **§ 180.820 How much time do I have to contest a proposed debarment?**

(a) As a respondent you or your representative must either send, or make arrangements to appear and present, the information and argument to the debarring official within 30 days after you receive the Notice of Proposed Debarment.

(b) The Federal agency taking the action considers the Notice of Proposed Debarment to be received by you—

(1) When delivered, if the agency mails the notice to the last known street address, or five days after the agency sends it if the letter is undeliverable;

(2) When sent, if the agency sends the notice by facsimile or five days after the agency sends it if the facsimile is undeliverable; or

(3) When delivered, if the agency sends the notice by e-mail or five days after the agency sends it if the e-mail is undeliverable.

### **§ 180.825 What information must I provide to the debarring official if I contest the proposed debarment?**

(a) In addition to any information and argument in opposition, as a respondent your submission to the debarring official must identify—

(1) Specific facts that contradict the statements contained in the Notice of Proposed Debarment. Include any information about any of the factors listed in §180.860. A general denial is insufficient to raise a genuine dispute over facts material to the debarment;

(2) All existing, proposed, or prior exclusions under regulations implementing Executive Order 12549 and all similar actions taken by Federal, State, or local agencies, including administrative agreements that affect only those agencies;

(3) All criminal and civil proceedings not included in the Notice of Proposed

Debarment that grew out of facts relevant to the cause(s) stated in the notice; and

(4) All of your affiliates.

(b) If you fail to disclose this information, or provide false information, the Federal agency taking the action may seek further criminal, civil or administrative action against you, as appropriate.

**§ 180.830 Under what conditions do I get an additional opportunity to challenge the facts on which the proposed debarment is based?**

(a) You as a respondent will not have an additional opportunity to challenge the facts if the debarring official determines that—

(1) Your debarment is based upon a conviction or civil judgment;

(2) Your presentation in opposition contains only general denials to information contained in the Notice of Proposed Debarment; or

(3) The issues raised in your presentation in opposition to the proposed debarment are not factual in nature, or are not material to the debarring official's decision whether to debar.

(b) You will have an additional opportunity to challenge the facts if the debarring official determines that—

(1) The conditions in paragraph (a) of this section do not exist; and

(2) Your presentation in opposition raises a genuine dispute over facts material to the proposed debarment.

(c) If you have an opportunity to challenge disputed material facts under this section, the debarring official or designee must conduct additional proceedings to resolve those facts.

**§ 180.835 Are debarment proceedings formal?**

(a) Debarment proceedings are conducted in a fair and informal manner. The debarring official may use flexible procedures to allow you as a respondent to present matters in opposition. In so doing, the debarring official is not required to follow formal rules of evidence or procedure in creating an official record upon which the official will base the decision whether to debar.

(b) You or your representative must submit any documentary evidence you want the debarring official to consider.

**§ 180.840 How is fact-finding conducted?**

(a) If fact-finding is conducted—

(1) You may present witnesses and other evidence, and confront any witness presented; and

(2) The fact-finder must prepare written findings of fact for the record.

(b) A transcribed record of fact-finding proceedings must be made, unless you as a respondent and the Federal agency agree to waive it in advance. If you want a copy of the transcribed record, you may purchase it.

**§ 180.845 What does the debarring official consider in deciding whether to debar me?**

(a) The debarring official may debar you for any of the causes in § 180.800. However, the official need not debar you even if a cause for debarment exists. The official may consider the seriousness of your acts or omissions and the mitigating or aggravating factors set forth at § 180.860.

(b) The debarring official bases the decision on all information contained in the official record. The record includes—

(1) All information in support of the debarring official's proposed debarment;

(2) Any further information and argument presented in support of, or in opposition to, the proposed debarment; and

(3) Any transcribed record of fact-finding proceedings.

(c) The debarring official may refer disputed material facts to another official for findings of fact. The debarring official may reject any resultant findings, in whole or in part, only after specifically determining them to be arbitrary, capricious, or clearly erroneous.

**§ 180.850 What is the standard of proof in a debarment action?**

(a) In any debarment action, the Federal agency must establish the cause for debarment by a preponderance of the evidence.

(b) If the proposed debarment is based upon a conviction or civil judgment, the standard of proof is met.