

§ 903.4

31 CFR Ch. IX (7-1-08 Edition)

from retaining a record of the account for purposes of:

(1) Selling the debt, if the Secretary determines that such sale is in the best interests of the United States;

(2) Pursuing collection at a subsequent date in the event there is a change in the debtor's status or a new collection tool becomes available;

(3) Offsetting against future income or assets not available at the time of termination of collection activity; or

(4) Screening future applicants for prior indebtedness.

(c) Generally, agencies shall terminate collection activity on a debt that has been discharged in bankruptcy, regardless of the amount. Agencies may continue collection activity, however, subject to the provisions of the Bankruptcy Code, for any payments provided under a plan of reorganization. Offset and recoupment rights may survive the discharge of the debtor in bankruptcy and, under some circumstances, claims also may survive the discharge. For example, the claims of an agency that it is a known creditor of a debtor may survive a discharge if the agency did not receive formal notice of the proceedings. Agencies should seek legal advice from their agency counsel if they believe they have claims or offsets that may survive the discharge of a debtor.

§ 903.4 Exception to termination.

When a significant enforcement policy is involved, or recovery of a judgment is a prerequisite to the imposition of administrative sanctions, agencies may refer debts for litigation even though termination of collection activity may otherwise be appropriate.

§ 903.5 Discharge of indebtedness; reporting requirements.

(a) Before discharging a delinquent debt (also referred to as a close out of the debt), agencies shall take all appropriate steps to collect the debt in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3711(g), including, as applicable, administrative offset, tax refund offset, Federal salary offset, referral to Treasury, Treasury-designated debt collection centers or private collection contractors, credit bureau reporting, wage garnishment, litigation, and foreclosure. Discharge

of indebtedness is distinct from termination or suspension of collection activity under part 903 of this title and is governed by the Internal Revenue Code. When collection action on a debt is suspended or terminated, the debt remains delinquent and further collection action may be pursued at a later date in accordance with the standards set forth in this chapter. When an agency discharges a debt in full or in part, further collection action is prohibited. Therefore, agencies should make the determination that collection action is no longer warranted before discharging a debt. Before discharging a debt, agencies must terminate debt collection action.

(b) Section 3711(i), title 31, United States Code, requires agencies to sell a delinquent nontax debt upon termination of collection action if the Secretary determines such a sale is in the best interests of the United States. Since the discharge of a debt precludes any further collection action (including the sale of a delinquent debt), agencies may not discharge a debt until the requirements of 31 U.S.C. 3711(i) have been met.

(c) Upon discharge of an indebtedness, agencies must report the discharge to the IRS in accordance with the requirements of 26 U.S.C. 6050P and 26 CFR 1.6050P-1. An agency may request Treasury or Treasury-designated debt collection centers to file such a discharge report to the IRS on the agency's behalf.

(d) When discharging a debt, agencies must request that litigation counsel release any liens of record securing the debt.

PART 904—REFERRALS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Sec.

904.1 Prompt referral.

904.2 Claims Collection Litigation Report.

904.3 Preservation of evidence.

904.4 Minimum amount of referrals to the Department of Justice.

AUTHORITY: 31 U.S.C. 3711.

SOURCE: 65 FR 70404, Nov. 22, 2000, unless otherwise noted.