

(i) *Return of property.* The lienholder may obtain possession of the property after paying the United States, through the Ruling Official, the costs and expenses incident to the forfeiture, the amount, if any, by which the appraised value of the property exceeds the lienholder's net equity in the property, and any amount specified in the Ruling Official's decision as a condition to remit the property. The Ruling Official, at his or her discretion, may waive costs and expenses incident to the forfeiture. The Ruling Official shall forward a copy of the decision, a memorandum of disposition, and the original releases to the United States Marshals Service or other property custodian who shall thereafter release the property to the lienholder; or

(ii) *Sale of property and payment to lienholder.* Subject to the provisions of §9.9(a), upon sale of the property, the lienholder may receive the payment of a monetary amount up to the sum of the lienholder's net equity, less the expenses and costs incident to the forfeiture and sale of the property, and any other monetary conditions imposed. The Ruling Official, at his or her discretion, may waive costs and expenses incident to the forfeiture.

(3) If the lienholder does not notify the Ruling Official of the selection of one of the two options set forth in paragraph (b)(2) of this section within twenty (20) days of the receipt of notification, the Ruling Official shall direct the United States Marshal or other property custodian to sell the property and pay the lienholder an amount up to the net equity, less the costs and expenses incurred incident to the forfeiture and sale, and any monetary conditions imposed. In the event a lienholder subsequently receives a payment of any kind on the debt owed for which he or she received payment as a result of the granting of remission or mitigation, the lienholder shall reimburse the Assets Forfeiture Fund to the extent of the payment received.

(4) Where the lienholder does not comply with the conditions imposed upon the release of the property, the property shall be sold after forfeiture. From the proceeds of the sale, all costs incident to the forfeiture and sale shall first be deducted, and the balance up to

the net equity, less any monetary conditions, shall be paid to the lienholder.

§9.8 Provisions applicable to victims.

The provisions of this section apply to victims of an offense underlying the forfeiture of property, or of a related offense, who do not have a present ownership interest in the forfeited property (or, in the case of multiple victims of an offense, who do not have a present ownership interest in the forfeited property that is clearly superior to that of other petitioner victims). The provisions of this section apply only with respect to property forfeited pursuant to statutes that explicitly authorize restoration or remission of forfeited property to victims. Victims who have a superior present legally cognizable ownership interest in forfeited property may file petitions, as other owners, subject to the regulations set forth in §9.7(a). The claims of such owner victims, like those of any other owners, shall have priority over the claims of any non-owner victims whose claims are recognized pursuant to this section.

(a) *Qualification to file.* A victim, as defined in §9.2(v), of an offense that was the underlying basis for the criminal, civil, or administrative forfeiture of specific property, or a victim of a related offense, may be granted remission of the forfeiture of that property, if in addition to complying with the other applicable provisions of §9.8, the victim satisfactorily demonstrates that:

(1) A pecuniary loss of a specific amount has been directly caused by the criminal offense, or related offense, that was the underlying basis for the forfeiture, and that the loss is supported by documentary evidence including invoices and receipts;

(2) The pecuniary loss is the direct result of the illegal acts and is not the result of otherwise lawful acts that were committed in the course of a criminal offense;

(3) The victim did not knowingly contribute to, participate in, benefit from, or act in a willfully blind manner towards the commission of the offense, or related offense, that was the underlying basis of the forfeiture;

(4) The victim has not in fact been compensated for the wrongful loss of the property by the perpetrator or others; and

(5) The victim does not have recourse reasonably available to other assets from which to obtain compensation for the wrongful loss of the property.

(b) *Pecuniary loss.* The amount of the pecuniary loss suffered by a victim for which remission may be granted is limited to the fair market value of the property of which the victim was deprived as of the date of the occurrence of the loss. No allowance shall be made for interest foregone or for collateral expenses incurred to recover lost property or to seek other recompense.

(c) *Torts.* A tort associated with illegal activity that formed the basis for the forfeiture shall not be a basis for remission, unless it constitutes the illegal activity itself, nor shall remission be granted for physical injuries to a petitioner or for damage to a petitioner's property.

(d) *Denial of petition.* In the exercise of his or her discretion, the Ruling Official may decline to grant remission where:

(1) There is substantial difficulty in calculating the pecuniary loss incurred by the victim or victims;

(2) The amount of the remission, if granted, would be small compared with the amount of expenses incurred by the government in determining whether to grant remission; or

(3) The total number of victims is large and the monetary amount of the remission so small as to make its granting impractical.

(e) *Pro rata basis.* In granting remission to multiple victims pursuant to this section, the Ruling Official should generally grant remission on a pro rata basis to recognized victims when petitions cannot be granted in full due to the limited value of the forfeited property. However, the Ruling Official may consider, among others, the following factors in establishing appropriate priorities in individual cases:

(1) The specificity and reliability of the evidence establishing a loss;

(2) The fact that a particular victim is suffering an extreme financial hardship;

(3) The fact that a particular victim has cooperated with the government in the investigation related to the forfeiture or to a related persecution or civil action; and

(4) In the case of petitions filed by multiple victims of related offenses, the fact that a particular victim is a victim of the offense underlying the forfeiture.

(f) *Reimbursement.* Any petitioner granted remission pursuant to this part shall reimburse the Assets Forfeiture Fund for the amount received to the extent the individual later receives compensation for the loss of the property from any other source. The petitioner shall surrender the reimbursement upon payment from any secondary source.

(g) *Claims of financial institution regulatory agencies.* In cases involving property forfeitable under 18 U.S.C. 981(a)(1)(C) or (a)(1)(D), the Ruling Official may decline to grant a petition filed by a petitioner in whole or in part due to the lack of sufficient forfeitable funds to satisfy both the petition and claims of the financial institution regulatory agencies pursuant to 18 U.S.C. 981(e)(3) or (7). Generally, claims of financial institution regulatory agencies pursuant to 18 U.S.C. 981(e)(3) or (7) shall take priority over claims of victims.

§9.9 Miscellaneous provisions.

(a) *Priority of payment.* Except where otherwise provided in this part, costs incurred by the United States Marshals Service and other agencies participating in the forfeiture that were incident to the forfeiture, sale, or other disposition of the property shall be deducted from the amount available for remission or mitigation. Such costs include, but are not limited to, court costs, storage costs, brokerage and other sales-related costs, the amount of any liens and associated costs paid by the government on the property, costs incurred in paying the ordinary and necessary expenses of a business seized for forfeiture, awards for information as authorized by statute, expenses of trustees or other assistants pursuant to paragraph (c) of this section, investigative or prosecutive costs