

Subpart B—Legal Process for the Enforcement of a Participant’s Legal Obligations To Provide Child Support or Make Alimony Payments

SOURCE: 60 FR 45624, Aug. 31, 1995, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1653.20 Purpose and scope.

This subpart contains regulations prescribing the Board’s procedures for responding to legal process for the enforcement of a participant’s legal obligations to make alimony or child support payments, as required by 5 U.S.C. 8437(e)(3).

§ 1653.21 Definitions.

As used in this subpart:

Alimony means the payment of funds for the support and maintenance of a spouse or former spouse. Alimony includes separate maintenance, alimony *pendente lite*, maintenance, and spousal support. Alimony also can include attorney’s fees, interest, and court costs, but only if these items are expressly made recoverable by qualifying legal process as described in § 1653.23.

Child support means payment of funds for the support and maintenance of a child or children. Child support includes payments to provide for health care, education, recreation, clothing, or to meet other specific needs of such a child or children. Child support also can include attorney’s fees, interest, and court costs, but only if these items are expressly made recoverable by qualifying legal process as described in § 1653.23.

Legal obligation means an obligation to pay alimony or child support, or both, that is currently enforceable under appropriate State or local law. A “legal obligation” may include currently payable, as well as past due, alimony or child support. However, “legal obligation” does not mean any future obligation to make alimony or child support payments.

§ 1653.22 Service of legal process.

The Thrift Savings Plan will only review legal process for the enforcement of a participant’s legal obligations to provide child support or make alimony

payments upon receipt of that process. Receipt by an employing agency or any other office of the government shall not constitute receipt by the Thrift Savings Plan. Legal process should be submitted to the Thrift Savings Plan Recordkeeper at the following address: TSP Service Office, National Finance Center, P.O. Box 61500, New Orleans, LA 70161-1500. Receipt by the recordkeeper will be considered receipt by the Thrift Savings Plan.

§ 1653.23 Requirements for “qualifying” legal process.

(a) The TSP will only honor legal process if it meets each requirement of paragraph (b) of this section and one of the requirements of paragraph (c) of this section.

(b) Legal process must meet each of the following requirements in order to be qualifying:

(1) The legal process must be a writ, order, summons, or other similar process in the nature of a garnishment that is issued by:

(i) a court or competent jurisdiction within any State, the District of Columbia, territory, or possession of the United States, or an Indian court; or

(ii) a court of competent jurisdiction in any foreign country with which the United States has entered into an agreement which requires the United States to honor such process; or

(iii) an authorized official pursuant to an order of such a court of competent jurisdiction or pursuant to State or local law; or

(iv) A State agency authorized to issue income withholding notices pursuant to State or local law or pursuant to the requirements of 42 U.S.C. 666(b).

(2) The legal process must “expressly relate” to the Thrift Savings Plan account of a current participant. This means that it must express a clear intent to deal with the TSP as distinct from other Federal Government retirement benefits or non-Federal retirement benefits.

(3) The legal process must demonstrate that its purpose is to enforce a current legal obligation of the participant to provide child support or make alimony payments.

(c) In addition to the requirements of paragraph (b) of this section, legal