

§ 33.8

other means, such as offset of other Federal payments or litigation.

§ 33.8 Voluntary repayment agreement in lieu of salary offset.

(a)(1) In response to the notice of intent to offset, the employee may propose to establish an alternative schedule for the voluntary repayment of the debt by submitting a written request to the Department official designated in the notice of intent to offset. An employee who wishes to repay the debt without salary offset shall also submit a proposed written repayment agreement. The proposal shall admit the existence of the debt, and the agreement must be in such form that it is legally enforceable. The agreement must:

- (i) Be in writing;
- (ii) Be signed by both the employee and the Department;
- (iii) Specify all the terms of the arrangement for payment; and
- (iv) Contain a provision accelerating the debt in the event of default by the employee, but such an increase may not result in a deduction that exceeds 15 percent of the employee's disposable pay unless the employee has agreed in writing to deduction of a greater amount.

(2) Any proposal under paragraph (a)(1) of this section must be received by the Department within 30 days of the date of the notice of intent to offset.

(b) In response to a timely request as described in paragraph (a) of this section, the designated Department official shall notify the employee whether the proposed repayment schedule is acceptable. It is within the Secretary's discretion to accept a proposed alternative repayment schedule, and to set the necessary terms of a voluntary repayment agreement.

(c) No voluntary repayment agreement will be binding on the Secretary unless it is in writing and signed by both the Secretary and the employee.

§ 33.9 Special review.

(a) A Department employee subject to salary offset or a voluntary repayment agreement may, at any time, request a special review by the Secretary of the amount of the salary offset or voluntary repayment installments,

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based on materially changed circumstances, such as, but not limited to, catastrophic illness, divorce, death, or disability.

(b)(1) In determining whether an offset would prevent the employee from meeting essential subsistence expenses, e.g., food, housing, clothing, transportation, and medical care, the employee shall submit a detailed statement and supporting documents for the employee, his or her spouse, and dependents indicating:

- (i) Income from all sources;
- (ii) Assets and liabilities;
- (iii) Number of dependents;
- (iv) Food, housing, clothing, transportation, and medical expenses; and
- (v) Exceptional and unusual expenses, if any.

(2) When requesting a special review under this section, the employee shall file an alternative proposed offset or payment schedule and a statement, with supporting documents as described in paragraph (b)(1) of this section, stating why the current salary offset or payments result in an extreme financial hardship to the employee.

(c)(1) The Secretary shall evaluate the statement and supporting documents, and determine whether the original offset or repayment schedule imposes extreme financial hardship on the employee.

(2) Within 30 calendar days of the receipt of the request and supporting documents, the Secretary shall notify the employee in writing of such determination, including, if appropriate, a revised offset or repayment schedule.

(d) If the special review results in a revised offset or repayment schedule, the Secretary shall provide a new certification to the paying agency.

§ 33.10 Procedures for salary offset.

(a) *Method and source of deductions.* Unless the employee and the Secretary have agreed to an alternative repayment arrangement under § 33.8, a debt shall be collected in lump sum or by installment deductions at officially established pay intervals from an employee's current pay account.

(b) *Limitation on amount of deduction.* Ordinarily, the size of installment deductions must bear a reasonable relationship to the size of the debt and the