

§ 206.3

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§ 206.3 Billing policy and procedures.

The billing process is considered an integral part of an effective cash management collection program. In those situations where bills are required and the failure to bill would affect the cash flow, bills will be prepared and transmitted within 5 business days after goods have been shipped or released, services have been rendered, or payment is otherwise due. An agency may prepare and transmit bills later than the 5-day timeframe if it can demonstrate that it is cost-effective to do so. In addition, the bill must include the terms and dates of payments, and late payment provisions, if applicable. Terms and dates of payments will be consistent with industry practices. I TFM 6-8000 describes detailed billing policies, procedures, and industry standards for agencies.

§ 206.4 Collection and payment mechanisms.

(a) All funds are to be collected and disbursed by EFT when cost-effective, practicable, and consistent with current statutory authority.

(b) Collections and payments will be made by EFT when cost-effective, practicable, and consistent with current statutory authority. When consistent with these criteria, specific cash flows will utilize EFT as follows:

(1) *Fees/fines.* EFT will be adopted as the presumed method of collecting fees and fines, especially when these collection cash flows are recurring or of large dollar amounts.

(2) *Tax collections.* EFT will be adopted as the primary method for collecting taxes. EFT mechanisms may include ACH credit or debit cards.

(3) *Salary payment.* Presumed EFT will be adopted as the method for paying employees, and entrance enrollment forms for establishing regular payments will be designed to use this approach.

(4) *Vendor and miscellaneous payments.* Each department and agency will exercise its authority under the Federal Acquisition Regulation to require that all contractors are paid by EFT, unless a determination is made that it is not in the best interest of the Federal Government to do so. EFT will be adopted as the standard method of payment for all Federal program payments originated by agencies or their agents.

(5) *Benefit payments.* EFT will be presented to new beneficiaries as the presumed method for receiving benefits. EFT payment methods, such as Electronic Benefit Transfer, will be adopted and implemented to make EFT accessible to all benefit recipients.

(c)(1) Selection of the best collection and payment mechanism is a joint responsibility of an agency and the Service. An agency has responsibility for conducting cash management reviews; gathering volume and dollar data relative to the operation of the systems; and funding any implementation and operational costs above those normally funded by Treasury. The Service is the required approval authority when an agency desires to convert from one collection mechanism to another. The Service's written approval is required prior to an agency entering into new contractual agreements or renewing existing contracts for agency collections or payments systems. Agencies will follow guidelines for the cost-effective usage of collection and payment mechanisms, published in the TFM, Volume I, Part 6-8000, in their selection and recommendation to the Service of an appropriate funds transfer mechanism. The agency will provide the Service with a recommended mechanism for any new or modified cash flows. The Service will review the recommendations, approve a mechanism, and assist with implementation.

(2) If an agency proposes a collection or payment mechanism other than EFT, it may be required to provide a cost-benefit analysis to justify its use. Cost/benefit analyses must include, at a minimum, known or estimated agency personnel costs, costs of procurement, recurring operational costs, equipment and system implementation