

under statutes or regulations governing the program for which the collection is being made; and

(13) Unless there are contractual or statutory provisions to the contrary, a statement that amounts paid on or deducted for the debt which are later waived or found not owed to the United States will be promptly refunded to the employee.

§ 1179.5 Hearing.

(a) *Request for hearing.* (1) An employee must file a petition for a hearing in accordance with the instructions outlined in the agency's notice to offset. (2) A hearing may be requested by filing a written petition addressed to the Chairperson of the National Endowment for the Humanities stating why the employee disputes the existence or amount of the debt. The petition for a hearing must be received by the Chairperson no later than fifteen (15) calendar days after the date of the notice to offset unless the employee can show good cause for failing to meet the deadline date.

(b) *Hearing procedures.* (1) The hearing will be presided over by an impartial hearing official. (2) The hearing shall conform to procedures contained in the Federal Claims Collection Standards 4 CFR 102.3(c). The burden shall be on the employee to demonstrate that the existence or the amount of the debt is in error.

§ 1179.6 Written decision.

(a) The hearing official shall issue a written opinion no later than 60 days after the hearing.

(b) The written opinion will include: a statement of the facts presented to demonstrate the nature and origin of the alleged debt; the hearing official's analysis, findings and conclusions; the amount and validity of the debt, and the repayment schedule.

§ 1179.7 Coordinating offset with another Federal agency.

(a) *The Endowment as the creditor agency.* (1) When the Chairperson determines that an employee of a Federal agency owes a delinquent debt to the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Chairperson shall as appropriate:

(i) Arrange for a hearing upon the proper petitioning by the employee;

(ii) Certify in writing that the employee owes the debt, the amount and basis of the debt, the date on which payment is due, the date the Government's right to collect the debt accrued, and that Endowment regulations for salary offset have been approved by the Office of Personnel Management;

(iii) If collection must be made in installments, the Chairperson must advise the paying agency of the amount or percentage of disposable pay to be collected in each installment;

(iv) Advise the paying agency of the actions taken under 5 U.S.C. 5514(b) and provide the dates on which action was taken unless the employee has consented to salary offset in writing or signed a statement acknowledging receipt of procedures required by law. The written consent or acknowledgment must be sent to the paying agency;

(v) If the employee is in the process of separating, the Endowment must submit its debt claim to the paying agency as provided in this part. The paying agency must certify any amounts already collected, notify the employee, and send a copy of the certification and notice of the employee's separation to the creditor agency. If the paying agency is aware that the employee is entitled to Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund or similar payments, it must certify to the agency responsible for making such payments the amount of the debt and that the provisions of this part have been followed; and

(vi) If the employee has already separated and all payments due from the paying agency have been paid, the Chairperson may request unless otherwise prohibited, that money payable to the employee from the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund or other similar funds be collected by administrative offset.

(b) *The Endowment as the paying agency.* (1) Upon receipt of a properly certified debt claim from another agency, deductions will be scheduled to begin at the next established pay interval. The employee must receive written notice that the National Endowment for

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the Humanities has received a certified debt claim from the creditor agency, the amount of the debt, the date salary offset will begin, and the amount of the deduction(s). The National Endowment for the Humanities shall not review the merits of the creditor agency's determination of the validity or the amount of the certified claim.

(2) If the employee transfers to another agency after the creditor agency has submitted its debt claim to the National Endowment for the Humanities and before the debt is collected completely, the National Endowment for the Humanities must certify the total amount collected. One copy of the certification must be furnished to the employee. A copy must be furnished the creditor agency with notice of the employee's transfer.

§ 1179.8 Procedures for salary offset.

(a) Deductions to liquidate an employee's debt will be by the method and in the amount stated in the Chairperson's notice of intention to offset as provided in § 1179.4. Debts will be collected in one lump sum where possible. If the employee is financially unable to pay in one lump sum, collection must be made in installments.

(b) Debts will be collected by deduction at officially established pay intervals from an employee's current pay account unless alternative arrangements for repayment are made.

(c) Installment deductions will be made over a period not greater than the anticipated period of employment. The size of installment deductions must bear a reasonable relationship to the size of the debt and the employee's ability to pay. The deduction for the pay intervals for any period must not exceed 15% of disposable pay unless the employee has agreed in writing to a deduction of a greater amount.

(d) Unliquidated debts may be offset against any financial payment due to a separated employee including but not

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limited to final salary payment or leave in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3716.

§ 1179.9 Refunds.

(a) The National Endowment for the Humanities will refund promptly any amounts deducted to satisfy debts owed to the NEH when the debt is waived, found not owed to the NEH, or when directed by an administrative or judicial order.

(b) The creditor agency will promptly return any amounts deducted by NEH to satisfy debts owed to the creditor agency when the debt is waived, found not owed, or when directed by an administrative or judicial order.

(c) Unless required by law, refunds under this section shall not bear interest.

§ 1179.10 Statute of limitations.

If a debt has been outstanding for more than 10 years after the agency's right to collect the debt first accrued, the agency may not collect by salary offset unless facts material to the Government's right to collect were not known and could not reasonably have been known by the official or officials who were charged with the responsibility for discovery and collection of such debts.

§ 1179.11 Non-waiver of rights.

An employee's involuntary payment of all or any part of a debt collected under these regulations will not be construed as a waiver of any rights that employee may have under 5 U.S.C. 5514 or any other provision of contract law unless there are statutes or contract(s) to the contrary.

§ 1179.12 Interest, penalties, and administrative costs.

Charges may be assessed for interest, penalties, and administrative costs in accordance with the Federal Claims Collection Standards, 4 CFR 102.13.