

(iv) Uncertainty as to the price that the security or other property will bring at forced sale, *or*

(2) The OGC advises that there is a real doubt concerning the Government's ability to prove its case in court for the full amount of the debt, and the amount offered represents a reasonable settlement considering:

(i) The probability of prevailing on the legal issues involved, and

(ii) The probability of proving facts to establish full or partial recovery, with due regard to the availability of witnesses and other pertinent factors, and

(iii) The probable amount of court costs and attorney's fees which may be assessed against the Government if it is unsuccessful in litigation, *or*

(3) When the cost of collecting the debt does not justify enforced collection of the full amount. In such cases, the amount accepted in compromise or adjustment may reflect an appropriate discount for administrative and litigious costs of collection. Such discount will not exceed \$600 unless the OGC advises that in the particular case a larger discount is appropriate. The cost of collecting may be a substantial factor in settling small debts but normally will not carry great weight in settling large debts.

**§§ 1956.125–1956.129 [Reserved]**

**§ 1956.130 Cancellation.**

Nonjudgment debts, regardless of the amount, may be cancelled with or without application by the debtor.

(a) *With application by debtor.* Debts may be cancelled upon application of the debtor(s), or if the debtor is an individual and unable to act, upon application of the guardian, executor, or administrator of the debtor's estate. The following conditions apply:

(1) The servicing official furnishes a favorable recommendation concerning the cancellation, and

(2) There is no known security for the debt and the debtor has no other assets from which the debt could be collected, and

(3) The debtor is unable to pay any part of the debt and has no reasonable prospect of being able to do so, and

(4) The debt or any extension thereof is due and payable under the terms of the note or other instrument, or because of acceleration by written notice prior to the date of application.

(b) *Without application by debtor.* Debts may be cancelled upon a favorable recommendation of the servicing official in the following instances:

(1) *Debtors discharged in bankruptcy.* If there is no security for the debt, debts discharged in bankruptcy shall be cancelled by the use of Form FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103–354 1956–1 with a copy of the Bankruptcy Court's Discharge Order attached. No attempt will be made to obtain the debtor's signature and County Committee review is unnecessary. If the debtor has executed a new promise to pay prior to discharge and has otherwise accomplished a valid reaffirmation of the debt in accordance with advice from OGC, the debt is not discharged.

(2) *Impossible or impractical to obtain a debtor's signature.* Debts may be cancelled if it is impossible or impractical to obtain a signed application and the requirements of §1956.130(a) (1), (2), and (3) *only* of this subpart are met. Form FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103–354 1956–1 will document:

(i) The sources of information obtained.

(ii) That a current effort was made to obtain the debtor's application and the date of such effort.

(iii) The specific reasons why it was impossible or impracticable to obtain the signature of the debtor and, if the debtor refused to sign, the reason(s) given.

(3) *Deceased debtors (individuals only).* The following conditions must exist:

(i) There is no known security,

(ii) An administrator or executor has not been appointed to settle the debtor's estate but the financial condition of the estate has been investigated and it has been established that there is no reasonable prospect of recovery, *or*

(iii) An administrator or executor has been appointed to settle the estate of the debtor, and

(A) A final settlement has been made and confirmed by the probate court and the Government's claim was recognized

**RHS, RBS, RUS, FSA, USDA**

**§ 1956.138**

properly and the Government has received all funds it was entitled to, or

(B) A final settlement has not been made and confirmed by the probate court, but there are no assets in the estate from which there is any reasonable prospect of recovery, or

(C) Regardless of whether a final settlement has been made, there were assets in the estate from which recovery might have been effected but such assets have been disposed of or lost in a manner which the OGC advises will preclude an reasonable prospect of recovery by the Government.

(4) *Disappeared debtor (individuals only)*. The following conditions must exist:

(i) The debtor has disappeared and cannot be found without undue expense. Reasonable efforts either in person or in writing will be made to locate the debtor. These efforts, including the names and dates of contacts, and the information furnished by each person, will be fully documented on Form FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 1956-1,

(ii) There is no known security for the debt and the debtor has no other assets from which the debt could be collected, and

(iii) The debtor is unable to pay any part of the debt and has no reasonable prospect of being able to do so.

**§§ 1956.131-1956.135 [Reserved]**

**§ 1956.136 Chargeoff.**

(a) *Judgment debts*. Subject to the provisions of §1956.112(d) of this subpart, judgment debts, regardless of the amount, may be charged off without the debtor's signature upon a favorable recommendation of the servicing official provided:

(1) The United States Attorney's file is closed, and

(2) The requirements of §1956.130(b)(1), (2), (3), or (4) of this subpart have been met, as appropriate, or two years have elapsed since any collections were made on the judgment and the debtor(s) has no equity in property on which the judgment is a lien or on which it can presently be made a lien.

(b) *Nonjudgment debts*. Debts which cannot be settled under other sections

of this subpart may be charged off without the debtor's signature upon a favorable recommendation of the servicing official in the following instances:

(1) When the OGC advises in writing that the claim is legally without merit, or that evidence necessary to prove the claim in court cannot be produced.

(2) When there is no known security for the debt, the debtor has no other assets from which the debt could be collected, and the debtor:

(i) Is unable to pay any party of the debt and has no reasonable prospect of being able to do so, or

(ii) Is able to pay part or all of the debt but refuses to do so, and an opinion is received from OGC to the effect that the Government cannot enforce collection of a significant amount from assets or income.

(3) When the debtor is deceased (individuals only), disappeared (individuals only), or when it is impossible or impractical to obtain the debtor's signature, and the conditions of §1956.136(b)(2) of this subpart are met.

**§ 1956.137 [Reserved]**

**§ 1956.138 Processing.**

(a) *Approval*. When a debt settlement application is approved, the State Director will:

(1) Send the original approved Form FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 1956-1 to the Finance Office.

(2) Notify debtors in writing of settlement approval, including the specific amount and terms of the offer that were accepted, for compromise and adjustment offers under §1956.124 and cancellations with application under §1956.130(a) of this subpart.

(3) Not be required to notify debtors of settlement approval when debts are cancelled without application under §1956.130(b) or charged off under §1956.136 of this subpart.

(b) *Requesting additional information*. When rejection appears to be necessary either because of lack of information or because the amount of a compromise or adjustment offer is inadequate, the State Director may request the servicing official to obtain the additional