

on loans of \$2 million or less subject to the State Director's delegated loan authority and meeting all of the conditions as set forth in this section. In cases where the State Director does not have the loan approval authority to approve a loan of \$2 million or less or the proposed percentage, the case must be submitted to the National Office for review.

(4) Each fiscal year, the Agency will establish a limit on the maximum portion of guarantee authority available for that fiscal year that may be used to guarantee loans with a guarantee percentage exceeding 80 percent. The limit will be announced by publishing a notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER. Once the limit has been reached, the guarantee percentage for all additional loans guaranteed during the remainder of that fiscal year will not exceed 80 percent.

[61 FR 67633, Dec. 23, 1996, as amended at 69 FR 64831, Nov. 9, 2004]

§ 4279.120 Fees and charges.

(a) *Routine lender fees.* The lender may establish charges and fees for the loan provided they are similar to those normally charged other applicants for the same type of loan in the ordinary course of business.

(b) *Professional services.* Professional services are those rendered by entities generally licensed or certified by States or accreditation associations, such as architects, engineers, packagers, accountants, attorneys, or appraisers. The borrower may pay fees for professional services needed for planning and developing a project provided that the amounts are reasonable and customary in the area. Professional fees may be included as an eligible use of loan proceeds.

§§ 4279.121–4279.124 [Reserved]

§ 4279.125 Interest rates.

The interest rate for the guaranteed loan will be negotiated between the lender and the applicant and may be either fixed or variable as long as it is a legal rate. Interest rates will not be more than those rates customarily charged borrowers in similar circumstances in the ordinary course of business and are subject to Agency re-

view and approval. Lenders are encouraged to utilize the secondary market and pass interest-rate savings on to the borrower.

(a) A variable interest rate agreed to by the lender and borrower must be a rate that is tied to a base rate agreed to by the lender and the Agency. The variable interest rate may be adjusted at different intervals during the term of the loan, but the adjustments may not be more often than quarterly and must be specified in the Loan Agreement. The lender must incorporate, within the variable rate Promissory Note at loan closing, the provision for adjustment of payment installments coincident with an interest-rate adjustment. The lender will ensure that the outstanding principal balance is properly amortized within the prescribed loan maturity to eliminate the possibility of a balloon payment at the end of the loan.

(b) Any change in the interest rate between the date of issuance of the Conditional Commitment and before the issuance of the Loan Note Guarantee must be approved in writing by the Agency approval official. Approval of such a change will be shown as an amendment to the Conditional Commitment.

(c) It is permissible to have one interest rate on the guaranteed portion of the loan and another rate on the unguaranteed portion of the loan provided that the rate on the guaranteed portion does not exceed the rate on the unguaranteed portion.

(d) A combination of fixed and variable rates will be allowed.

§ 4279.126 Loan terms.

(a) The maximum repayment for loans on real estate will not exceed 30 years; machinery and equipment repayment will not exceed the useful life of the machinery and equipment purchased with loan funds or 15 years, whichever is less; and working capital repayment will not exceed 7 years. The term for a loan that is being refinanced may be based on the collateral the lender will take to secure the loan.

(b) The first installment of principal and interest will, if possible, be scheduled for payment after the project is operational and has begun to generate