

submitting a subsequent claim to the General Accounting Office in accordance with procedures established by the General Accounting Office.

#### § 179.203 Definitions.

As used in this subpart the following definitions shall apply:

*Agency* means:

(1) An Executive Agency as defined by section 105 of title 5, United States Code;

(2) A military department as defined by section 102 of title 5, United States Code;

(3) An agency or court of the judicial branch including a court as defined in section 610 of title 28, United States Code, the District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands and the Judicial Panel and Multidistrict Litigation;

(4) An agency of the legislative branch, including the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives; and

(5) Other independent establishments that are entities of the Federal Government.

*Certification* means a written debt claim, as prescribed by § 179.209, that is received from a creditor agency and which requests the paying agency to offset the salary of an employee.

*Claim* See debt.

*Creditor agency* means an agency of the Federal Government to which the debt is owed. For purposes of this part *creditor agency* includes OPM, unless otherwise noted.

*Debt* means money owed by an employee of the Federal Government to an agency of the Federal Government, from sources which include loans insured or guaranteed by the United States and all other amounts due the Government from fees, leases, rents, royalties, services, sales of real or personal property, overpayments, penalties, damages, interests, fines and forfeitures (except those arising under the Uniform Code of Military Justice) and all other similar sources.

*Delinquent* means the failure to pay an obligation or debt by the date specified in the initial notification or applicable contractual agreement, unless other payment arrangements have been agreed to by OPM and the debtor by that date, or if, at any time thereafter, the debtor fails to satisfy the obliga-

tions under a payment agreement with the creditor agency.

*Director* means the Director of OPM or his or her designee.

*Disposable pay* means that part of current basic pay, special pay, incentive pay, retired pay, retainer pay, or, in the case of an employee not entitled to basic pay, other authorized pay remaining after the deduction of any amount required by law to be withheld. OPM shall allow the following deductions, and any others required by law to be withheld, in determining disposable pay subject to salary offset;

(1) Federal employment taxes;

(2) Amounts mandatorily withheld for the U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home;

(3) Fines and forfeitures ordered by a court martial or by a commanding officer;

(4) Federal, state or local income taxes no greater than would be the case if the employee claimed all dependents to which he or she is entitled and such additional amounts for which the employee presents evidence of a tax obligation supporting the additional withholding;

(5) Amounts withheld from benefits payable under title II of the Social Security Act where the withholding is required by law;

(6) Amounts deducted for Medicare;

(7) Health insurance premiums;

(8) Normal retirement contributions as explained in 5 CFR 581.105(e) (e.g., Civil Service Retirement deductions, Survivor Benefit Plan or Retired Serviceman's Family Protection Plan); and

(9) Normal life insurance premiums (e.g., Serviceman's Group Life Insurance and basic Federal Employee's Group Life Insurance premiums) exclusive of optional life insurance premiums.

*Employee* means a current employee of OPM or other agency, including a current member of the Armed Forces or Reserve of the Armed Forces of the United States.

*FCCS* means the Federal Claims Collection Standards jointly published by the Department of Justice and the General Accounting Office of 4 CFR 101.1 *et seq.*

*Hearing official* means an individual (including an administrative law judge)

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responsible for conducting any hearing with respect to the existence or amount of a debt claimed, and rendering a decision on the basis of such hearing. A hearing official may not be under the supervision or control of the Director of OPM when OPM is the creditor agency.

*Notice of intent to offset* or *notice of intent* means a written notice from a creditor agency to an employee that states the creditor agency's determination that the employee owes a debt to the creditor agency and apprises the employee of certain administrative rights.

*Notice of salary offset* means a written notice from the paying agency to an employee after a certification has been issued by the creditor agency, informing the employee that salary offset will begin at the next officially established pay interval.

*Office* means the central and regional offices of the Office of Personnel Management.

*Paying agency* means the agency of the Federal Government which employs the individual who owes a debt to an agency of the Federal Government. In some cases, OPM may be both the creditor agency and the paying agency.

*Payroll office* means the payroll office in the paying agency which is primarily responsible for the payroll records and the coordination of pay matters with the appropriate personnel office with respect to an employee. Payroll office, with respect to OPM, means the central payroll office.

*Salary offset* means an administrative offset to collect a debt under 5 U.S.C. 5514 by deduction(s) at one or more officially established pay intervals from the current pay account of an employee, without his or her consent.

*Salary Offset Coordinator* means an official, designated by the Director of OPM, who is responsible for coordinating debt collection activities for OPM.

*Waiver* means the cancellation, remission, forgiveness, or non-recovery of a debt allegedly owed by an employee to OPM or another agency as permitted or required by 5 U.S.C. 5584, 10 U.S.C. 2774, 32 U.S.C. 716, or any other law.

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### § 179.204 Applicability of regulations.

These regulations are to be followed for all OPM collections (except those involving retirement, life, and health insurance debts for recovery by the Associate Director for Retirement and Insurance) in instances where:

(a) OPM is owed a debt by an individual currently employed by another agency;

(b) OPM is owed a debt by an individual who is a current employee of OPM; or

(c) OPM currently employs an individual who owes a debt to another Federal agency. Upon receipt of proper certification from the creditor agency, OPM will offset the debtor-employee's salary in accordance with these regulations.

### § 179.205 Waiver requests and claims to the General Accounting Office.

These regulations do not preclude an employee from requesting waiver of an overpayment under 5 U.S.C. 5584, 10 U.S.C. 2774, 32 U.S.C. 716, or in any way questioning the amount or validity of a debt by submitting a subsequent claim to the General Accounting Office in accordance with the procedures prescribed by the General Accounting Office. These regulations do not preclude an employee from requesting a waiver pursuant to other statutory provisions pertaining to the particular debt being collected.

### § 179.206 Notice requirements before offset.

(a) Deductions under the authority of 5 U.S.C. 5514 shall not be made unless the creditor agency provides the employee with written notice that he/she owes a debt to the Federal government a minimum of 30 calendar days before salary offset is initiated. When OPM is the creditor agency, this notice of intent to offset an employee's salary shall be hand-delivered at work, or sent by registered mail, return receipt requested, to the employee's most current address that is available to the Office and will state:

(1) That the creditor agency has reviewed the records relating to the claim and has determined that a debt is owed, the amount of the debt, and the facts giving rise to the debt;