

§ 20.3

(b) The term *consumer debt* means any non-tax debt of an individual in excess of \$100, arising from loans—loan guarantees, overpayments, fines, penalties, or other causes.

(c) A debt is considered delinquent if it has not been paid by the date specified in the agency's initial demand letter (§20.4), unless satisfactory payment arrangements have been made by that date, or if, at any time thereafter, the debtor fails to satisfy his obligations under a payment agreement with the Department of Labor, or any agency thereof.

(d) The term *claim* and *debt* are deemed synonymous and interchangeable. They refer to an amount of money or property which has been determined by an appropriate agency official to be owed to the United States from any person, organization, or entity, except another federal agency.

§ 20.3 Agency responsibilities.

(a) As authorized by law, each Department of Labor agency may report all delinquent consumer debts to consumer credit reporting agencies and may also report all commercial debts to appropriate commercial credit reporting agencies.

(b) Information provided to a consumer credit reporting agency on delinquent consumer debts from a system of records subject to the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. 552a, must be maintained by the Department of Labor in accordance with that Act, except as otherwise modified by law. Furthermore, no disclosure may be made until the appropriate notice of system of records has been amended in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552a(e)(11).

(c) The Chief Financial Officer, or his or her designee, shall have the responsibility for obtaining satisfactory assurances from each credit reporting agency to which information will be provided, concerning compliance by the credit reporting agency with the Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 U.S.C. 1681 *et seq.*) and any other Federal law governing the provision of credit information.

(d) The information disclosed to the credit reporting agency is limited to: (1) The name, address, taxpayer identification number, and other information

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necessary to establish the identity of the individual, (2) the amount, status, and history of the claim, and (3) the Department of Labor agency or program under which the claim arose.

(e) The agency official providing information to a credit reporting agency: (1) Shall promptly disclose to each credit reporting agency to which the original disclosure was made, any substantial change in the status or amount of the claim; and (2) shall within 30 days whenever feasible, or otherwise promptly verify or correct, as appropriate, information concerning the claim upon the request of any such credit reporting agency for verification of any or all information so disclosed.

(f) Each Department of Labor agency is responsible for ensuring the continued accuracy of calculations and records relating to its claims, and for the prompt notification to the credit reporting agency of any substantial change in the status or amount of the claim. The agencies shall promptly follow-up on any allegation made by a debtor that the records of the agency concerning a claim are in error. Agencies should respond promptly to communications from the debtor, within 30 days whenever feasible.

(g) The agency official responsible for providing information to a consumer credit reporting agency shall take reasonable action to locate the individual owing the debt prior to disclosing any information to a consumer credit reporting agency.

§ 20.4 Determination of delinquency; notice.

(a) The agency head (or designee) responsible for carrying out the provisions of this subpart with respect to the debt shall send to the debtor appropriate written demands for payment in terms which inform the debtor of the consequences of failure to cooperate. In accordance with guidelines established by the Chief Financial Officer, a total of three progressively stronger written demands at not more than 30-day intervals will normally be made unless a response to the first or second demand indicates that a further demand would be futile and the debtor's response does not require rebuttal. In determining