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sets forth the consequences of a debarment or suspension. Those consequences would obtain only with respect to participants and principals in the covered transactions and activities described in §85.110(a). Sections 85.325, “Scope of debarment,” and 85.420, “Scope of suspension,” govern the extent to which a specific participant or organizational elements of a participant would be automatically included within a debarment or suspension action, and the conditions under which affiliates or persons associated with a participant may also be brought within the scope of the action.

(c) *Relationship to Federal procurement activities.* In accordance with E.O. 12689 and section 2455 of Public Law 103-355, any debarment, suspension, proposed debarment or other governmentwide exclusion initiated under the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) on or after August 25, 1995 shall be recognized by and effective for Executive Branch agencies and participants as an exclusion under this regulation. Similarly, any debarment, suspension or other governmentwide exclusion initiated under this regulation on or after August 25, 1995 shall be recognized by and effective for those agencies as a debarment or suspension under the FAR.

(Authority: E.O.s 12549 and 12689; 20 U.S.C. 1082, 1094, 1221e-3 and 3474; and Sec. 2455, Pub. L. 103-355, 108 Stat. 3243 at 3327)

[53 FR 19191 and 19204, May 26, 1988, as amended at 60 FR 33042, 33056, June 26, 1995]

§ 85.115 Policy.

(a) In order to protect the public interest, it is the policy of the Federal Government to conduct business only with responsible persons. Debarment and suspension are discretionary actions that, taken in accordance with Executive Order 12549 and these regulations, are appropriate means to implement this policy.

(b) Debarment and suspension are serious actions which shall be used only in the public interest and for the Federal Government’s protection and not for purposes of punishment. Agencies may impose debarment or suspension for the causes and in accordance with the procedures set forth in these regulations.

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(c) When more than one agency has an interest in the proposed debarment or suspension of a person, consideration shall be given to designating one agency as the lead agency for making the decision. Agencies are encouraged to establish methods and procedures for coordinating their debarment or suspension actions.

(Authority: E.O.s 12549 and 12689; 20 U.S.C. 1082, 1094, 1221e-3 and 3474; and Sec. 2455, Pub. L. 103-355, 108 Stat. 3243 at 3327)

Subpart B—Effect of Action

§ 85.200 Debarment or suspension.

(a) *Primary covered transactions.* Except to the extent prohibited by law and subject to §85.201, Treatment of title IV HEA participation, persons who are debarred or suspended shall be excluded from primary covered transactions as either participants or principals throughout the executive branch of the Federal Government for the period of their debarment, suspension or the period they are proposed for debarment under 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4. Accordingly, ED shall not enter into primary covered transactions with such excluded persons during such period, except as permitted pursuant to §85.215.

(b) *Lower tier covered transactions.* Except to the extent prohibited by law and subject to §85.201, Treatment of title IV HEA participation, persons who have been proposed for debarment under 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4, debarred or suspended shall be excluded from participating as either participants or principals in all lower tier covered transactions (see §85.110(a)(1)(ii)) for the period of their exclusion. Such persons shall also be excluded from all contracts to provide federally-required audit services, regardless of contract amount.

(c) *Exceptions.* Debarment or suspension does not affect a person’s eligibility for—

(1) Statutory entitlements or mandatory awards (but not subtier awards thereunder which are not themselves mandatory), including deposited funds insured by the Federal Government;

(2) Direct awards to foreign governments or public international organizations, or transactions with foreign governments or foreign governmental entities, public international organizations, foreign government owned (in whole or in part) or controlled entities, and entities consisting wholly or partially of foreign governments or foreign governmental entities;

(3) Benefits to an individual as a personal entitlement without regard to the individual's present responsibility (but benefits received in an individual's business capacity are not excepted);

(4) Federal employment;

(5) Transactions pursuant to national or agency-recognized emergencies or disasters;

(6) Incidental benefits derived from ordinary governmental operations; and

(7) Other transactions where the application of these regulations would be prohibited by law.

(Authority: E.O.s 12549 and 12689; 20 U.S.C. 1082, 1094, 1221e-3 and 3474; and sec. 2455, Pub. L. 103-355, 108 Stat. 3243 at 3327)

[60 FR 33041, 33056, June 26, 1995]

§85.201 Treatment of title IV, HEA participation.

(a)(1) The debarment of an educational institution, lender, or third party servicer under E.O. 12549 by an agency other than the Department pursuant to procedures described in paragraph (c) of this section terminates the eligibility of the entity to enter into transactions under any student financial assistance program authorized by title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, for the duration of the debarment.

(2)(i) The suspension of an educational institution, lender, or servicer under E.O. 12549 or pursuant to a proposed debarment under the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4, by an agency other than the Department under procedures described in paragraph (c) of this section suspends the eligibility of the entity to enter into transactions under any student financial assistance program authorized by title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended.

(ii) The suspension of title IV eligibility as a result of a suspension de-

scribed in paragraph (a)(2) of this section lasts for a period of 60 days, beginning on the later of the date of the decision of the suspending official of the other agency in response to an objection to the suspension or, if no objection to that suspension was raised, on the 35th day after the notice of suspension was issued by that agency. The suspension described here does not expire on the 60th day if the suspended entity and the Secretary agree to an extension or if the Secretary initiates a limitation or termination proceeding against the entity under 34 CFR part 668, subpart G, or part 682, subpart G, as applicable, prior to the 60th day.

(3) A transaction under a title IV, HEA program includes—

(i) The disbursement or delivery of funds provided under a title IV, HEA program to a student or borrower;

(ii) The certification by an educational institution of eligibility for a loan under at title IV, HEA program;

(iii) The acquisition of a loan made under a title IV, HEA program; and

(iv) The acquisition of any servicing responsibility for a grant, loan, or work study assistance under a title IV, HEA program.

(b)(1) The Secretary notifies the institution, lender, or servicer that has been debarred or suspended by another Federal agency whether the debarment or suspension takes effect in accordance with paragraph (a) of this section and states the effective date and duration of that action.

(2)(i) If the Secretary proposes to give effect to a suspension or debarment against an educational institution, lender, or third-party servicer that does not meet the standards in paragraph (c) of this section, the Secretary initiates a debarment or suspension proceeding under §85.316 or §85.414, respectively, against that entity.

(ii) The effective date of a debarment or suspension that takes effect under paragraph (a) of this section shall be 20 days after the date the notice is mailed. The Secretary gives effect to a suspension described in paragraph (a)(2) of this section only after the suspending official of the other agency has issued a decision in response to an objection to the suspension or, if no objection to that suspension was raised,

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on the 35th day after the notice of suspension was issued by that agency. The suspension lasts for a period of 60 days, beginning on the effective date specified in the notice, unless the suspended entity and the Secretary agree to an extension or the Secretary initiates a limitation or termination proceeding against the entity under 34 CFR part 668, subpart G, or part 682, subpart G, as applicable, prior to the 60th day.

(3) If an institution, lender, or a third party servicer is suspended by ED or another Federal agency, the Secretary determines whether grounds exist for the initiation of an emergency action against the entity under 34 CFR part 668, subpart G, or part 682, subpart G, as applicable.

(c) An institution, lender, or third-party servicer that is debarred or suspended by another agency, or proposed for debarment under 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4 by another Federal agency, is debarred, terminated or suspended, as provided under this part, 34 CFR part 668, and 34 CFR part 682, as applicable, if that agency took this action under procedures that afforded the excluded party the following:

- (1) Notice of the proposed action;
- (2) An opportunity to submit and have considered evidence and argument in opposition to the proposed action;
- (3) An opportunity to obtain a hearing on its objection—
 - (i) At which the agency bears the burden of persuasion, by a preponderance of the evidence;
 - (ii) Conducted by an impartial person who does not also exercise prosecutorial or investigative responsibilities with respect to that action;
 - (iii) At which the entity may, unless the hearing official determines that no genuine dispute of material fact exists, present testimony and secure the attendance of those agency witnesses with personal knowledge of material facts whose testimony the hearing official determines to be needed, in light of other available evidence and witnesses; and
 - (iv) Of which a transcribed record is available upon request; and
- (4) A written decision stating findings of fact and conclusions of law on which the decision is rendered.

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(d) The title IV, HEA programs are those programs listed in 34 CFR 668.1(c).

(Authority: E.O.s 12549 and 12689; 20 U.S.C. 1082, 1094, 1221e-3 and 3474; and Sec. 2455, Pub. L. 103-355, 108 Stat. 3243 at 3327)

[60 FR 33056, June 26, 1995]

§ 85.205 Ineligible persons.

Persons who are ineligible, as defined in § 85.105(i), are excluded in accordance with the applicable statutory, executive order, or regulatory authority.

(Authority: E.O.s 12549 and 12689; 20 U.S.C. 1082, 1094, 1221e-3 and 3474; and Sec. 2455, Pub. L. 103-355, 108 Stat. 3243 at 3327)

§ 85.210 Voluntary exclusion.

Persons who accept voluntary exclusions under § 85.315 are excluded in accordance with the terms of their settlements. ED shall, and participants may, contact the original action agency to ascertain the extent of the exclusion.

(Authority: E.O.s 12549 and 12689; 20 U.S.C. 1082, 1094, 1221e-3 and 3474; and Sec. 2455, Pub. L. 103-355, 108 Stat. 3243 at 3327)

§ 85.215 Exception provision.

ED may grant an exception permitting a debarred, suspended, or voluntarily excluded person, or a person proposed for debarment under 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4, to participate in a particular covered transaction upon a written determination by the agency head or an authorized designee stating the reason(s) for deviating from the Presidential policy established by Executive Order 12549 and § 85.200. However, in accordance with the President's stated intention in the Executive Order, exceptions shall be granted only infrequently. Exceptions shall be reported in accordance with § 85.505(a).

(Authority: E.O.s 12549 and 12689; 20 U.S.C. 1221e-3 and 3474; Sec. 2455, Pub. L. 103-355, 108 Stat. 3243 at 3327)

[60 FR 33041, 33056, June 26, 1995]

§ 85.220 Continuation of covered transactions.

(a) Notwithstanding the debarment, suspension, proposed debarment under 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4, determination of ineligibility, or voluntary exclusion of any person by an agency and

except as provided in §85.201, agencies and participants may continue covered transactions in existence at the time the person was debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment under 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded. A decision as to the type of termination action, if any, to be taken should be made only after thorough review to ensure the propriety of the proposed action.

(b) Agencies and participants shall not renew or extend covered transactions (other than no-cost time extensions) with any person who is debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment under 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4, ineligible or voluntarily excluded, except as provided in §85.215.

(c) An educational institution, lender, or servicer may continue a title IV, HEA transaction after the effective date of a debarment as determined under §85.201 only as provided in 34 CFR 668.26, 682.702, or 668.94, as applicable.

(Authority: E.O.s 12549 and 12689; 20 U.S.C. 1082, 1094, 1221e-3 and 3474; and Sec. 2455, Pub. L. 103-355, 108 Stat. 3243 at 3327)

[60 FR 33057, June 26, 1995]

§85.225 Failure to adhere to restrictions.

(a) Except as permitted under §85.215 or §85.220, a participant shall not knowingly do business under a covered transaction with a person who is—

- (1) Debarred or suspended;
- (2) Proposed for debarment under 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4; or
- (3) Ineligible for or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction.

(b) Violation of the restriction under paragraph (a) of this section may result in disallowance of costs, annulment or termination of award, issuance of a stop work order, debarment or suspension, or other remedies as appropriate.

(c) A participant may rely upon the certification of a prospective participant in a lower tier covered transaction that it and its principals are not debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment under 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction (See appendix B of these regulations), unless it knows that the certification is erro-

neous. An agency has the burden of proof that a participant did knowingly do business with a person that filed an erroneous certification.

[60 FR 33041, 33056, June 26, 1995]

Subpart C—Debarment

§85.300 General.

The debarring official may debar a person for any of the causes in §85.305, using procedures established in §§85.310 through 85.314. The existence of a cause for debarment, however, does not necessarily require that the person be debarred; the seriousness of the person's acts or omissions and any mitigating factors shall be considered in making any debarment decision.

(Authority: E.O.s 12549 and 12689; 20 U.S.C. 1082, 1094, 1221e-3 and 3474; and sec. 2455, Pub. L. 103-355, 108 Stat. 3243 at 3327)

§85.305 Causes for debarment.

Debarment may be imposed in accordance with the provisions of §§85.300 through 85.314 for:

(a) Conviction of or civil judgment for:

(1) Commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public or private agreement or transaction;

(2) Violation of Federal or State anti-trust statutes, including those proscribing price fixing between competitors, allocation of customers between competitors, and bid rigging;

(3) Commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, receiving stolen property, making false claims, or obstruction of justice; or

(4) Commission of any other offense indicating a lack of business integrity or business honesty that seriously and directly affects the present responsibility of a person.

(b) Violation of the terms of a public agreement or transaction so serious as to affect the integrity of an agency program, such as:

(1) A willful failure to perform in accordance with the terms of one or more public agreements or transactions;