

## General Services Administration

## § 105-55.027

payment in full of the compromise amount and the Government and its officials, past and present, are released and discharged from any and all claims and causes of action arising from the same transaction that the debtor may have. In the event a mutual release is not executed when a debt is compromised, unless prohibited by law, the debtor is still deemed to have waived any and all claims and causes of action against the Government and its officials related to the transaction giving rise to the compromised debt.

### § 105-55.026 Suspending or terminating collection activity.

(a) The standards set forth in §§ 105-55.027 and 105-55.028 apply to the suspension or termination of collection activity pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3711 on debts that do not exceed \$100,000, or such other amount as the Attorney General may direct, exclusive of interest, penalties, and administrative costs, after deducting the amount of partial payments or collections, if any. Prior to referring a debt to the Department of Justice (DOJ) for litigation, the General Services Administration (GSA) may suspend or terminate collection under this part with respect to debts arising out of activities of, or referred or transferred for collection services to, the Agency.

(b) If, after deducting the amount of any partial payments or collections, the principal amount of a debt exceeds \$100,000, or such other amount as the Attorney General may direct, exclusive of interest, penalties, and administrative costs, the authority to suspend or terminate rests solely with DOJ. If GSA believes suspension or termination of any debt in excess of \$100,000 may be appropriate, the Agency will refer the debt to the Civil Division or other appropriate litigating division in DOJ, using the Claims Collection Litigation Report. The referral will specify the reasons for the Agency's recommendation. If, prior to referral to DOJ, GSA determines a debt is plainly erroneous or clearly without legal merit, the Agency may terminate collection activity regardless of the amount involved without obtaining DOJ concurrence.

### § 105-55.027 Suspension of collection activity.

(a) The General Services Administration (GSA) may suspend collection activity on a debt when—

(1) The Agency cannot locate the debtor;

(2) The debtor's financial condition is expected to improve; or

(3) The debtor has requested a waiver or review of the debt.

(b) Based on the current financial condition of the debtor, GSA may suspend collection activity on a debt when the debtor's future prospects justify retention of the debt for periodic review and collection activity and—

(1) The applicable statute of limitations has not expired; or

(2) Future collection can be effected by administrative offset, notwithstanding the expiration of the applicable statute of limitations for litigation of claims, with due regard to the 10-year limitation for administrative offset prescribed by 31 U.S.C. 3716(e)(1); or

(3) The debtor agrees to pay interest on the amount of the debt on which collection will be suspended, and such suspension is likely to enhance the debtor's ability to pay the full amount of the principal of the debt with interest at a later date.

(c)(1) GSA will suspend collection activity during the time required for consideration of the debtor's request for waiver or administrative review of the debt if the statute under which the request is sought prohibits the Agency from collecting the debt during that time.

(2) If the statute under which the request is sought does not prohibit collection activity pending consideration of the request, GSA will use discretion, on a case-by-case basis, to suspend collection. Further, GSA ordinarily will suspend collection action upon a request for waiver or review if the Agency is prohibited by statute or regulation from issuing a refund of amounts collected prior to Agency consideration of the debtor's request. However, GSA will not suspend collection when the Agency determines the request for waiver or review is frivolous or was made primarily to delay collection.

(d) When GSA learns a bankruptcy petition has been filed with respect to

a debtor, in most cases the collection activity on a debt will be suspended, pursuant to the provisions of 11 U.S.C. 362, 1201, and 1301, unless the Agency can clearly establish the automatic stay has been lifted or is no longer in effect. GSA will, if legally permitted, take the necessary legal steps to ensure no funds or money are paid by the Agency to the debtor until relief from the automatic stay is obtained.

**§ 105-55.028 Termination of collection activity.**

(a) The General Services Administration (GSA) may terminate collection activity when—

- (1) The Agency is unable to collect any substantial amount through its own efforts or through the efforts of others;
- (2) The Agency is unable to locate the debtor;
- (3) Costs of collection are anticipated to exceed the amount recoverable;
- (4) The debt is legally without merit or enforcement of the debt is barred by any applicable statute of limitations;
- (5) The debt cannot be substantiated; or
- (6) The debt against the debtor has been discharged in bankruptcy.

(b) Before terminating collection activity, GSA will pursue all appropriate means of collection and determine, based upon the results of the collection activity, that the debt is uncollectible. Termination of collection activity ceases active collection of the debt. The termination of collection activity does not preclude GSA from retaining a record of the account for purposes of—

- (1) Selling the debt, if the Secretary determines that such sale is in the best interests of the United States;
- (2) Pursuing collection at a subsequent date in the event there is a change in the debtor's status or a new collection tool becomes available;
- (3) Offsetting against future income or assets not available at the time of termination of collection activity; or
- (4) Screening future applicants of loans and loan guaranties, licenses, permits, or privileges for prior indebtedness.

(c) Generally, GSA will terminate collection activity on a debt that has been discharged in bankruptcy, regard-

less of the amount. GSA may continue collection activity, however, subject to the provisions of the Bankruptcy Code, for any payments provided under a plan of reorganization. Offset and recoupment rights may survive the discharge of the debtor in bankruptcy and, under some circumstances, claims also may survive the discharge. For example, the claims of GSA that it is a known creditor of a debtor may survive a discharge if the Agency did not receive formal notice of the proceedings.

**§ 105-55.029 Exception to termination.**

When a significant enforcement policy is involved, or recovery of a judgment is a prerequisite to the imposition of administrative sanctions, the General Services Administration may refer debts for litigation even though termination of collection activity may otherwise be appropriate.

**§ 105-55.030 Discharge of indebtedness; reporting requirements.**

(a) Before discharging a delinquent debt (also referred to as a close out of the debt), the General Services Administration (GSA) will take all appropriate steps to collect the debt in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3711(g), including, as applicable, administrative offset, tax refund offset, Federal salary offset, referral to Treasury, Treasury-designated debt collection centers or private collection contractors, credit bureau reporting, wage garnishment, litigation, and foreclosure. Discharge of indebtedness is distinct from termination or suspension of collection activity and is governed by the Internal Revenue Code. When collection action on a debt is suspended or terminated, the debt remains delinquent and further collection action may be pursued at a later date in accordance with the standards set forth in this part. When GSA discharges a debt in full or in part, further collection action is prohibited. Therefore, GSA will make the determination that collection action is no longer warranted before discharging a debt. Before discharging a debt, GSA will terminate debt collection action.