

§ 3431.22

(e) *Debt Collection.* Individuals in breach of a service agreement entered into under this part are considered to owe a debt to the United States for the amount of repayment. Any such debt will be collected pursuant to the Department's Debt Management regulations at 7 CFR part 3.

§ 3431.22 Waiver.

(a) A program participant may seek a waiver or suspension of the service or payment obligations incurred under this part by written request to the Secretary setting forth the bases, circumstances, and causes which support the requested action.

(b) The Secretary may waive any service or payment obligation incurred by a program participant whenever compliance by the program participant is impossible or would involve extreme hardship to the program participant and if enforcement of the service or payment obligation would be against equity and good conscience.

(1) Compliance by a program participant with a service or repayment obligation will be considered impossible if the Secretary determines, on the basis of information and documentation as may be required:

(i) That the program participant suffers from a physical or mental disability resulting in the permanent inability of the program participant to perform the service or other activities which would be necessary to comply with the obligation; or

(ii) That the employment of the program participant has been terminated involuntarily for reasons unrelated to job performance.

(2) In determining whether compliance by a program participant with the terms of a service or repayment obligation imposes an extreme hardship, the Secretary may, on the basis of information and documentation as may be required, take into consideration the nature of the participant's personal problems and the extent to which these affect the participant's ability to perform the obligation.

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(c) All requests for waivers must be submitted to the Secretary in writing.

(d) A program participant who is granted a waiver in accordance with this section will be notified by the Secretary in writing.

(e) Any obligation of a program participant for service or payment will be canceled upon the death of the program participant.

§ 3431.23 Service to Federal government in emergency situations.

(a) The Secretary may enter into agreements of 1 year duration with veterinarians who have service agreements for such veterinarians to provide services to the Federal Government in emergency situations, as determined by the Secretary, under terms and conditions specified in the agreement.

(b) Pursuant to a service agreement under this section, the Secretary shall pay an amount, in addition to the amount paid, as determined by the Secretary and specified in the agreement, of the principal and interest of qualifying educational loans of the veterinarians. This amount will be provided in the RFA.

(c) Agreements entered into under this paragraph shall include the following:

(1) A veterinarian shall not be required to serve more than 60 working days per year of the agreement.

(2) A veterinarian who provides service pursuant to the agreement shall receive a salary commensurate with the duties and shall be reimbursed for travel and per diem expenses as appropriate for the duration of the service.

§ 3431.24 Reporting requirements, monitoring, and close-out.

VMLRP participants will be required to submit periodic reports per the terms and conditions of their service agreements. In addition, the Secretary is responsible for ensuring that a VMLRP participant is complying with the terms and conditions of their service agreement, including any additional reporting or close-out requirements.