

§ 19.19

garnishment or repayment schedule imposes an extreme financial hardship on the debtor. The Commerce entity will evaluate the statement and documentation and determine whether the current offset, garnishment, or repayment schedule imposes extreme financial hardship on the debtor. The Commerce entity shall notify the debtor in writing of such determination, including, if appropriate, a revised offset, garnishment, or payment schedule. If the special review results in a revised offset, garnishment, or repayment schedule, the Commerce entity will notify the appropriate Federal agency or other persons about the new terms.

§ 19.19 Will Commerce entities issue a refund if money is erroneously collected on a Commerce debt?

Commerce entities shall promptly refund to a debtor any amount collected on a Commerce debt when the Commerce debt is waived or otherwise found not to be owed to the United States, or as otherwise required by law. Refunds under this Part shall not bear interest unless required by law.

Subpart C—Procedures for Offset of Commerce Department Payments To Collect Debts Owed to Other Federal Agencies

§ 19.20 How do other Federal agencies use the offset process to collect debts from payments issued by a Commerce entity?

(a) *Offset of Commerce entity payments to collect debts owed to other Federal agencies.* (1) In most cases, Federal agencies submit debts to the Treasury Offset Program to collect delinquent debts from payments issued by Commerce entities and other Federal agencies, a process known as “centralized offset.” When centralized offset is not available or appropriate, any Federal agency may ask a Commerce entity (when acting as a “payment agency”) to collect a debt owed to such agency by offsetting funds payable to a debtor by the Commerce entity, including salary payments issued to Commerce entity employees. This section and § 19.21 of this subpart C apply when a Federal agency asks a Commerce entity to off-

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set a payment issued by the Commerce entity to a person who owes a debt to the United States.

(2) This subpart C does not apply to Commerce debts. See §§ 19.10 through 19.12 of this Part for offset procedures applicable to Commerce debts.

(3) This subpart C does not apply to the collection of non-Commerce debts through tax refund offset. See 31 CFR 285.2 for tax refund offset procedures.

(b) *Administrative offset (including salary offset); certification.* A Commerce entity will initiate a requested offset only upon receipt of written certification from the creditor agency that the debtor owes the past-due, legally enforceable debt in the amount stated, and that the creditor agency has fully complied with all applicable due process and other requirements contained in 31 U.S.C. 3716, 5 U.S.C. 5514, and the creditor agency’s regulations, as applicable. Offsets will continue until the debt is paid in full or otherwise resolved to the satisfaction of the creditor agency.

(c) *Where a creditor agency makes requests for offset.* Requests for offset under this section shall be sent to the Department of Commerce, ATTN: Deputy Chief Financial Officer, 1401 Constitution Avenue, NW., Room 6827, Washington, DC 20230. The Deputy Chief Financial Officer will forward the request to the appropriate Commerce entity for processing in accordance with this subpart C.

(d) *Incomplete certification.* A Commerce entity will return an incomplete debt certification to the creditor agency with notice that the creditor agency must comply with paragraph (b) of this section before action will be taken to collect a debt from a payment issued by a Commerce entity.

(e) *Review.* A Commerce entity is not authorized to review the merits of the creditor agency’s determination with respect to the amount or validity of the debt certified by the creditor agency.

(f) *When Commerce entities will not comply with offset request.* A Commerce entity will comply with the offset request of another agency unless the Commerce entity determines that the