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(i) The Agency purchased and is holder of a loan that was assigned by the lender that is requesting the assignment.

(ii) The lender has not complied with the reimbursement requirements of § 762.144(c)(7), except when the 180 day reimbursement or liquidation requirement has been waived by the Agency.

(3) The lender will provide the Agency with copies of all appropriate forms used in the assignment.

(4) The guaranteed portion of the loan may not be assigned by the lender until the loan has been fully disbursed to the borrower.

(5) The lender is not permitted to assign any amount of the guaranteed or unguaranteed portion of the loan to the applicant or borrower, or members of their immediate families, their officers, directors, stockholders, other owners, or any parent, subsidiary, or affiliate.

(6) Upon the lender's assignment of the guaranteed portion of the loan, the lender will remain bound to all obligations indicated in the Guarantee, Lender's Agreement, the Agency program regulations, and to future program regulations not inconsistent with the provisions of the Lenders Agreement. The lender retains all rights under the security instruments for the protection of the lender and the United States.

(b) The following will occur upon the lender's assignment of the guaranteed portion of the loan:

(1) The holder will succeed to all rights of the Guarantee pertaining to the portion of the loan assigned.

(2) The lender will send the holder the borrower's executed note attached to the Guarantee.

(3) The holder, upon written notice to the lender and the Agency, may assign the unpaid guaranteed portion of the loan. The holder must assign the guaranteed portion back to the original lender if requested for servicing or liquidation of the account.

(4) The Guarantee or Assignment of Guarantee in the holder's possession does not cover:

(i) Interest accruing 90 days after the holder has demanded repurchase by the lender, except as provided in the Assignment of Guarantee and § 762.144(c)(3)(iii).

(ii) Interest accruing 90 days after the lender or the Agency has requested the holder to surrender evidence of debt repurchase, if the holder has not previously demanded repurchase.

(c) Negotiations concerning premiums, fees, and additional payments for loans are to take place between the holder and the lender. The Agency will participate in such negotiations only as a provider of information.

[70 FR 56107, Sept. 26, 2005]

PART 763—LAND CONTRACT GUARANTEE PROGRAM

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§ 763.1 Introduction.

(a) *Purpose.* The Land Contract Guaranteed Program provides certain financial guarantees to the seller of a farm through a land contract sale to a beginning farmer or a socially disadvantaged farmer.

(b) *Types of guarantee.* The seller may request either of the following:

(1) *The prompt payment guarantee plan.* The Agency will guarantee an

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amount not to exceed three amortized annual installments plus an amount equal to the total cost of any related real estate taxes and insurance incurred during the period covered by the annual installment; or

(2) *The standard guarantee plan.* The Agency will guarantee an amount equal to 90 percent of the outstanding principal under the land contract.

(c) *Guarantee period.* The guarantee period is 10 years for either plan regardless of the term of the land contract.

§763.2 Abbreviations and definitions.

Abbreviations and definitions for terms used in this part are in §761.2 of this chapter.

§763.3 Full faith and credit.

(a) The land contract guarantee constitutes an obligation supported by the full faith and credit of the United States. The Agency may contest the guarantee only in cases of fraud or misrepresentation by the seller, in which:

(1) The seller had actual knowledge of the fraud or misrepresentation at the time it became the seller, or

(2) The seller participated in or condoned the fraud or misrepresentation.

(b) Loss claims also may be reduced or denied to the extent that any negligence contributed to the loss under §763.22.

§763.4 Authorized land contract purpose.

The Agency will only guarantee the Contract installments, real estate taxes and insurance; or outstanding principal balance for an eligible seller of a family farm, through a land contract sale to an eligible beginning or socially disadvantaged farmer.

§763.5 Eligibility.

(a) *Seller eligibility requirements.* The private seller, and each entity member in the case of an entity seller, must:

(1) Possess the legal capacity to enter into a legally binding agreement;

(2) Not have provided false or misleading documents or statements during past or present dealings with the Agency;

(3) Not be ineligible due to disqualification resulting from Federal Crop

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Insurance violation, according to 7 CFR part 718; and

(4) Not be suspended or debarred under 2 CFR parts 180 and 417.

(b) *Buyer eligibility requirements.* The buyer must meet the following requirements to be eligible for the Land Contract Guarantee Program:

(1) Is a beginning farmer or socially disadvantaged farmer engaged primarily in farming in the United States after the guarantee is issued.

(2) Is the owner and operator of a family farm after the Contract is completed. In the case of an entity buyer:

(i) Each entity member's ownership interest may not exceed the amount specified in the family farm definition in §761.2 of this chapter.

(ii) The entity members cannot themselves be entities.

(iii) The entity must be authorized to own and operate a farm in the State in which the farm is located.

(iv) If the entity members holding a majority interest are related by blood or marriage, at least one member of the entity must:

(A) Operate the farm and

(B) Own the farm after the contract is completed;

(v) If the entity members holding a majority interest are not related by blood or marriage, the entity members holding a majority interest must:

(A) Operate the farm; and

(B) Own the farm, or the entity itself must own the farm after the contract is completed;

(3) Must have participated in the business operations of a farm or ranch for at least 3 years out of the last 10 years prior to the date the application is submitted.

(4) The buyer, and all entity members in the case of an entity, must not have caused the Agency a loss by receiving debt forgiveness on all or a portion of any direct or guaranteed loan made under the authority of the Act by debt write-down or write-off; compromise, adjustment, reduction, or charge off under the provisions of section 331 of the Act; discharge in bankruptcy; or through payment of a guaranteed loss claim on more than three occasions on or prior to April 4, 1996 or any occasion after April 4, 1996. If the debt forgiveness is resolved by repayment of the

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Agency's loss, the Agency may still consider the debt forgiveness in determining the applicant's creditworthiness.

(5) The buyer, and all entity members in the case of an entity, must not be delinquent on any Federal debt, other than a debt under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, when the guarantee is issued.

(6) The buyer, and all entity members in the case of an entity, may have no outstanding unpaid judgment awarded to the United States in any court. Such judgments do not include those filed as a result of action in the United States Tax Courts.

(7) The buyer, and all entity members in the case of an entity, must be a citizen of the United States, United States non-citizen national, or a qualified alien under applicable Federal immigration laws. United States non-citizen nationals and qualified aliens must provide the appropriate documentation as to their immigration status as required by the United States Department of Homeland Security, Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services.

(8) The buyer, and all entity members in the case of an entity, must possess the legal capacity to enter into a legally binding agreement.

(9) The buyer, and all entity members in the case of an entity, must not have provided false or misleading documents or statements during past or present dealings with the Agency.

(10) The buyer, and all entity members in the case of an entity, must not be ineligible as a result of a conviction for controlled substances according to 7 CFR part 718.

(11) The buyer, and all entity members in the case of an entity, must have an acceptable credit history demonstrated by satisfactory debt repayment.

(i) A history of failures to repay past debts as they came due when the ability to repay was within their control will demonstrate unacceptable credit history.

(ii) Unacceptable credit history will not include:

(A) Isolated instances of late payments which do not represent a pattern

and were clearly beyond their control; or

(B) Lack of credit history.

(12) The buyer is unable to enter into a contract unless the seller obtains an Agency guarantee to finance the purchase of the farm at reasonable rates and terms.

(13) The buyer, and all entity members in the case of an entity, must not be ineligible due to disqualification resulting from Federal Crop Insurance violation, according to 7 CFR part 718.

(14) The buyer, and all entity members in the case of an entity, must not be suspended or debarred under 2 CFR parts 180 and 417.

§ 763.6 Limitations.

(a) To qualify for a guarantee, the purchase price of the farm to be acquired through the land contract sale cannot exceed the lesser of:

(1) \$500,000 or

(2) The current market value of the property.

(b) A guarantee will not be issued if the appraised value of the farm is greater than \$500,000.

(c) Existing land contracts are not eligible for the Land Contract Guarantee Program.

(d) Guarantees may not be used to establish or support a non-eligible enterprise.

§ 763.7 Application requirements.

(a) *Seller application requirements.* A seller who contacts the Agency with interest in a guarantee under the Land Contract Guarantee Program will be sent the land contract letter of interest outlining specific program details. To formally request a guarantee on the proposed land contract, the seller, and each entity member in the case of an entity, must:

(1) Complete, sign, date, and return the land contract letter of interest to the Agency, and

(2) Provide the name, address, and telephone number of the chosen servicing or escrow agent.

(b) *Buyer application requirements.* A complete application from the buyer will include:

(1) The completed Agency application form;

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(2) A current financial statement (not older than 90 days);

(3) If the buyer is an entity:

(i) A complete list of entity members showing the address, citizenship, principal occupation, and the number of shares and percentage of ownership or stock held in the entity by each member, or the percentage of interest in the entity held by each member;

(ii) A current personal financial statement for each member of the entity;

(iii) A current financial statement for the entity itself;

(iv) A copy of the entity's charter or any entity agreement, any articles of incorporation and bylaws, any certificate or evidence of current registration (in good standing), and a resolution adopted by the Board of Directors or entity members authorizing specified officers of the entity to apply for and obtain the land contract guarantee and execute required debt, security, and other instruments and agreements; and

(v) In the form of a married couple applying as a joint operation, items in paragraphs (b)(3)(i) and (b)(3)(iv) of this section will not be required. The Agency may request copies of the marriage license, prenuptial agreement, or similar documents as needed to verify loan eligibility and security. The information specified in paragraphs (b)(3)(ii) and (iii) of this section are only required to the extent needed to show the individual and joint finances of the husband and wife without duplication;

(4) A brief written description of the buyer's proposed operation;

(5) A farm operating plan;

(6) A brief written description of the buyer's farm training and experience;

(7) Three years of income tax and other financial records acceptable to the Agency, unless the buyer has been farming less than 3 years;

(8) Three years of farm production records, unless the buyer has been farming less than 3 years;

(9) Verification of income and off-farm employment if relied upon for debt repayment;

(10) Verification of all debts;

(11) Payment of the credit report fee;

(12) Documentation of compliance with the environmental regulations in part 1940, subpart G, of this title;

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(13) A copy of the proposed land contract; and

(14) Any additional information deemed necessary by the Agency to effectively evaluate the applicant's eligibility and farm operating plan.

§ 763.8 Incomplete applications.

(a) Within 10 days of receipt of an incomplete application, the Agency will provide the seller and buyer written notice of any additional information that must be provided. The seller or buyer, as applicable, must provide the additional information within 20 calendar days of the date of the notice.

(b) If the additional information is not received, the Agency will provide written notice that the application will be withdrawn if the information is not received within 10 calendar days of the date of the second notice.

§ 763.9 Processing complete applications.

Applications will be approved or rejected and all parties notified in writing no later than 30 calendar days after application is considered complete.

§ 763.10 Feasibility.

(a) The buyer's proposed operation as described in a form acceptable to the Agency must represent the operating cycle for the farm operation and must project a feasible plan as defined in § 761.2(b) of this chapter.

(b) The projected income, expenses, and production estimates:

(1) Must be based on the buyer's last 3 years actual records of production and financial management unless the buyer has been farming less than 3 years;

(2) For those farming less than 3 years, a combination of any actual history and other reliable sources of information may be used. Sources must be documented and acceptable to the Agency; and

(3) May deviate from historical performance if deviations are the direct result of specific changes in the operation, reasonable, justified, documented, and acceptable to the Agency.

(c) Price forecasts used in the plan must be reasonable, documented, and acceptable to the Agency.

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(d) The Agency will analyze the buyer's business ventures other than the farm operation to determine their soundness and contribution to the operation.

(e) When a feasible plan depends on income from sources other than from owned land, the income must be dependable and likely to continue.

(f) When the buyer's farm operating plan is developed in conjunction with a proposed or existing Agency direct loan, the two farm operating plans must be consistent.

§ 763.11 Maximum loss amount, guarantee period, and conditions.

(a) *Maximum loss amount.* The maximum loss amount due to nonpayment by the buyer covered by the guarantee is based on the type of guarantee initially selected by the seller as follows:

(1) The prompt payment guarantee will cover:

(i) Three amortized annual installments; or

(ii) An amount equal to three annual installments (including an amount equal to the total cost of any tax and insurance incurred during the period covered by the annual installments).

(2) The standard guarantee will cover an amount equal to 90 percent of the outstanding principal balance.

(b) *Guarantee period.* The period of the guarantee will be 10 years from the effective date of the guarantee unless terminated earlier under § 763.23.

(c) *Conditions.* The seller will select an escrow agent to service a Land Contract Agreement if selecting the prompt payment guarantee plan, and a servicing agent to service a Land Contract Agreement if selecting the standard guarantee plan.

(1) An escrow agent must provide the Agency evidence of being a bonded title insurance company, attorney, financial institution or fiscally responsible institution.

(2) A servicing agent must provide the Agency evidence of being a bonded commercial lending institution or similar entity, registered and authorized to provide escrow and collection services in the State in which the real estate is located.

§ 763.12 Down payment, rates, terms, and installments.

(a) *Down payment.* The buyer must provide a minimum down payment of five percent of the purchase price of the farm.

(b) *Interest rate.* The interest rate charged by the seller must be fixed at a rate not to exceed the Agency's direct FO loan interest rate in effect at the time the guarantee is issued, plus three percentage points. The seller and buyer may renegotiate the interest rate for the remaining term of the contract following expiration of the guarantee.

(c) *Land contract terms.* The contract payments must be amortized for a minimum of 20 years and payments on the contract must be of equal amounts during the term of the guarantee.

(d) *Balloon installments.* Balloon payments are prohibited during the 10-year term of the guarantee.

§ 763.13 Fees.

(a) *Payment of fees.* The seller and buyer will be responsible for payment of any expenses or fees necessary to process the Land Contract Agreement required by the State or County to ensure that proper title is vested in the seller including, but not limited to, attorney fees, recording costs, and notary fees.

(b) [Reserved]

§ 763.14 Appraisals.

(a) *Standard guarantee plan.* For the standard guarantee plan, the value of real estate to be purchased will be established by an appraisal obtained at Agency expense and completed as specified in § 761.7 of this chapter. An appraisal is required prior to, or as a condition of, approval of the guarantee.

(b) *Prompt payment guarantee plan.* The Agency may, at its option and expense, obtain an appraisal to determine value of real estate to be purchased under the Prompt Payment Guarantee plan.

§ 763.15 Taxes and insurance.

(a) The seller will ensure that taxes and insurance on the real estate are paid timely and will provide the evidence of payment to the escrow or servicing agent.

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(b) The seller will maintain flood insurance, if available, if buildings are located in a special 100-year floodplain as defined by FEMA flood hazard area maps.

(c) The seller will report any insurance claim and use of proceeds to the escrow or servicing agent.

§ 763.16 Environmental regulation compliance.

(a) *Environmental compliance requirements.* The environmental requirements contained in part 799 and part 1940, subpart G, of this title must be met prior to approval of guarantee request.

(b) *Determination.* The Agency determination of whether an environmental problem exists will be based on:

(1) The information supplied with the application;

(2) Environmental resources available to the Agency including, but not limited to, documents, third parties, and government agencies;

(3) Other information supplied by the buyer or seller upon Agency request; and

(4) A visit to the farm.

§ 763.17 Approving application and executing guarantee.

(a) Approval is subject to the availability of funds, meeting the requirements in this part, and the participation of an approved escrow or servicing agent, as applicable.

(b) Upon approval of the guarantee, all parties (buyer, seller, escrow or servicing agent, and Agency official) will execute the Agency's guarantee agreement.

(c) The "Land Contract Agreement for Prompt Payment Guarantee" or the "Land Contract Agreement for Standard Guarantee" will describe the conditions of the guarantee, outline the covenants and any agreements of the buyer, seller, escrow or servicing agent, and the Agency, and outline the process for payment of loss claims.

§ 763.18 General servicing responsibilities.

(a) For the prompt payment guarantee plan, the seller must use a third party escrow agent approved by the Agency. The escrow agent will:

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(1) Provide the Agency a copy of the recorded Land Contract;

(2) Handle transactions relating to the Land Contract between the buyer and seller;

(3) Receive Land Contract installment payments from the buyer and send them to the seller;

(4) Provide evidence to the Agency that property taxes are paid and insurance is kept current on the security property;

(5) Send a notice of payment due to the buyer at least 30 days prior to the installment due date;

(6) Notify the Agency and the seller if the buyer defaults;

(7) Service delinquent accounts as specified in § 763.20(a);

(8) Make demand on the Agency to pay missed payments;

(9) Send the seller any missed payment amount paid by the Agency under the guarantee;

(10) Notify the Agency on March 31 and September 30 of each year of the outstanding balance on the Land Contract and the status of payment; and

(11) Perform other duties as required by State law and as agreed to by the buyer and the seller;

(b) For the standard guarantee plan, the seller must use a third party servicing agent approved by the Agency. The servicing agent will:

(1) Provide the Agency a copy of the recorded Land Contract;

(2) Handle transactions relating to the Land Contract between the buyer and seller;

(3) Receive Land Contract installment payments from the buyer and send them to the seller;

(4) Provide evidence to the Agency that property taxes are paid and insurance is kept current on the security property;

(5) Perform a physical inspection of the farm each year during the term of the guarantee, and provide an annual inspection report to the Agency;

(6) Obtain from the buyer a current balance sheet, income statement, cash flow budget, and any additional information needed, perform, and provide the Agency an analysis of the buyer's financial condition on an annual basis;

(7) Notify the Agency on March 31 and September 30 of each year of the

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outstanding balance on the Land Contract and the status of payment;

(8) Send a notice of payment due to the buyer at least 30 days prior to the installment due date;

(9) Notify the Agency and the seller if the buyer defaults;

(10) Service delinquent accounts as specified in § 763.20(b); and

(11) Perform other duties as required by State law and as agreed to by the buyer and the seller.

§ 763.19 Contract modification.

(a) The seller and buyer may modify the land contract to lower the interest rate and corresponding amortized payment amount without Agency approval.

(b) With prior written approval from the Agency, the seller and buyer may modify the land contract provided that, in addition to a feasible plan for the upcoming operating cycle, a feasible plan can be reasonably projected throughout the remaining term of the guarantee. Such modifications may include but are not limited to:

(1) Deferral of installments,

(2) Leasing or subleasing, and

(3) Partial releases. All proceeds from a partial release or royalties from mineral extraction must be applied to a prior lien, if one exists, and in addition, the same amount must be credited to the principal balance of the land contract.

(4) Transfer and assumption. If the guarantee is to remain in effect, any transfer of the property and assumption of the guaranteed debt must be made to an eligible buyer for the Land Contract Guarantee Program as specified in § 763.5(b), and must be approved by the Agency in writing. If an eligible buyer for transfer and assumption cannot be found, the Deputy Administrator for Farm Loan Programs may make an exception to this requirement when in the Government's best financial interests.

(5) Assignment. The seller may not assign the contract to another party without written consent of the Agency.

(c) Any contract modifications other than those listed above must be approved by the Deputy Administrator for Farm Loan Programs, and will only be approved if such action is deter-

mined permissible by law and in the Government's best financial interests.

§ 763.20 Delinquent servicing and collecting on guarantee.

(a) *Prompt payment guarantee plan.* If the buyer fails to pay an annual amortized installment or a portion of an installment on the contract or taxes or insurance when due, the escrow agent:

(1) Must make a written demand on the buyer for payment of the defaulted amount within 30 days of the missed payment, taxes, or insurance and send a copy of the demand letter to the Agency and to the seller; and

(2) Must make demand on the Agency within 90 days from the original payment, taxes, or insurance due date, for the missed payment in the event the buyer has not made the payment.

(b) *Standard guarantee plan.* If the buyer fails to pay an annual amortized installment or a portion of an installment on the contract, then the seller has the option of either liquidating the real estate, or having the amount of the loss established by the Agency by an appraisal of the real estate. For either option, the servicing agent:

(1) Must make a written demand on the buyer for payment of the defaulted amount within 30 days of the missed payment, and send a copy of the demand letter to the Agency and to the seller; and

(2) Must immediately inform the Agency which option the seller has chosen for establishing the amount of the loss, in the event the buyer does not make the payment within 60 days of the demand letter.

(i) *Liquidation method.* If the seller chooses the liquidation method, the servicing agent will:

(A) Submit a liquidation plan to the Agency within 120 days from the missed payment for approval prior to any liquidation action. The Agency may require and pay for an appraisal prior to approval of the liquidation plan.

(B) Complete liquidation within 12 months of the missed installment unless prevented by bankruptcy, redemption rights, or other legal action.

(C) Credit an amount equal to the sale price received in a liquidation of

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the security property, with no deduction for expenses, to the principal balance of the land contract.

(D) File a loss claim immediately after liquidation, which must include a complete loan ledger.

(E) Base the loss claim amount on the appraisal method if the property is reacquired by the seller, through liquidation.

(ii) *Appraisal method.* If the seller chooses to have the loss amount established by appraisal rather than liquidation, the Agency will complete an appraisal on the real estate, and the loss claim amount will be based on the difference between the appraised value at the time the loss is calculated and the unpaid principal balance of the land contract at that time.

(A) The only administrative appeal allowed under §761.6 of this chapter related to the resulting appraisal amount will be a determination of whether the appraisal is Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP) compliant.

(B) The seller will give the Agency a lien on the security property in the amount of the loss claim payment. If the property sells within 5 years from the date of the loss payment for an amount greater than the appraised value used to establish the loss claim amount, the seller must repay the difference, up to the amount of the loss claim. For purposes of determining the amount to be repaid (recapture), the market value of the property may be reduced by the value of certain capital improvements, as specified in §766.202(a)(1)–(3) of this chapter, made by the seller to the property in the time period from the loss claim to final disposition. If the property is not sold within 5 years from the date of the loss payment, the Agency will release the lien and the seller will have no further obligation to the Agency.

§763.21 Establishment of Federal debt and Agency recovery of loss claim payments.

(a) Any amount paid by FSA as a result of an approved loss claim is immediately due and payable by the buyer after FSA notifies the buyer that a loss claim has been paid to the seller. If the debt is not restructured into a repay-

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ment plan or the obligation otherwise cured, FSA may use all remedies available, including offset as authorized by the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996, to collect the debt.

(1) Interest on the debt will be at the FLP non-program real property loan rate in effect at the time of the first Agency payment of a loss claim.

(2) The debt may be scheduled for repayment consistent with the buyer's repayment ability, not to exceed 7 years. Before any payment plan can be approved, the buyer must provide the Agency with the best lien obtainable on all of the buyer's assets. This includes the buyer's ownership interest in the real estate under contract for guarantees using the prompt payment guarantee plan. When the buyer is an entity, the best lien obtainable will be taken on all of the entity's assets, and all assets owned by individual members of the entity, including their ownership interest in the real estate under contract.

(b) Annually, buyers with an Agency approved repayment plan under this section will supply the Agency a current balance sheet, income statement, cash flow budget, complete copy of Federal income tax returns, and any additional information needed to analyze the buyer's financial condition.

(c) If a buyer fails to make required payments to the Agency as specified in the approved repayment plan, the debt will be treated as a non-program loan debt, and servicing will proceed as specified in §766.351(c) of this chapter.

§763.22 Negligence and negligent servicing.

(a) The Agency may deny a loss claim in whole or in part due to negligence that contributed to the loss claim. This could include, but is not limited to:

(1) The escrow and servicing agent failing to seek payment of a missed installment from the buyer within the prescribed timeframe or otherwise does not enforce the terms of the land contract;

(2) Losing the collateral to a third party, such as a taxing authority, prior lien holder, *etc*;

(3) Not performing the duties and responsibilities required of the escrow or servicing agent;

(4) The seller's failure to disclose environmental issues; or

(5) Any other action in violation of the land contract or guarantee agreement that does not terminate the guarantee.

(b) [Reserved]

§ 763.23 Terminating the guarantee.

(a) The guarantee and the Agency's obligations will terminate at the earliest of the following circumstances:

(1) Full payment of the land contract;

(2) Agency payment to the seller of 3 annual installments plus property taxes and insurance, if applicable, under the prompt payment guarantee plan, if not repaid in full by the buyer. An Agency approved repayment plan will not constitute payment in full until such time as the entire amount due for the Agency approved repayment plan is paid in full;

(3) Payment of a loss claim through the standard guarantee plan;

(4) Sale of real estate without guarantee being properly assigned;

(5) The seller terminates the land contract for reasons other than monetary default; or

(6) If for any reason the land contract becomes null and void.

(b) If none of the events in paragraph (a) of this section occur, the guarantee will automatically expire, without notice, 10 years from the effective date of the guarantee.

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