

**871—53.19(84A,PL105-220) Debt collection procedures.**

**53.19(1)** Debt collection begins once the debt has been established by either an audit final determination or financial/program monitoring final decision letter. Debts arising from other forms of oversight will be identified through written communication to the chief elected official board.

**53.19(2)** If the debt is appealed, debt collection is suspended until that appeal is resolved. If the appeal is granted, debt collection shall not be established.

**53.19(3)** No earlier than 15 days, but not later than 20 days, after the debt has been established, an initial demand for repayment letter shall be sent to the chief elected official board by certified mail with return receipt requested. The initial demand letter informs the chief elected official board that a debt has been established and references the previous letter that established the debt. When applicable, instructions for requesting a waiver from debt shall be provided in the letter. The chief elected official board shall be granted 15 days from the date of the initial demand letter either to submit payment in full or to forward the applicable request for waiver. If the chief elected official board refuses those options, does not accept the letter, or if no response is received within the required time frame, a final demand for payment shall be issued.

**53.19(4)** The final demand letter, also sent by certified mail with return receipt requested, shall ask for payment within 10 days from the date of that letter. If the chief elected official board refuses the options identified in the final demand letter, does not accept the letter or does not respond, legal action shall be taken. Such action will seek payment of the debt as well as applicable court costs and accrued interest.

**53.19(5)** The debt collection process is suspended if a request for waiver is received by the department in accordance with waiver policies applicable to that program. If the request for waiver is denied, the debt collection process will continue.

**53.19(6)** Payment options. Payment options include the following:

*a.* Payment in full. Payment of debts is generally a one-time cash payment due at the time of final determination by the department. In cases of documented financial hardship or for other reasons as allowed by law, the department may grant repayment as outlined in “*b*” or “*c*” below. However, the department may charge interest on debts from the date they are established.

*b.* Repayment agreement. A repayment agreement may be negotiated for a time period not to exceed one year. The agreement must be written and signed by both parties. The agreement must include a schedule of payments which includes exact payment dates, amount of debt and each payment, interest, dates of agreement and a requirement for payment in full for breach of the agreement by the chief elected official board.

*c.* Allocation reduction. Where allowable, a reduction may be made in a chief elected official board’s budget to offset a debt. This may be done in cases where the misexpenditure of funds was not due to willful disregard of the Act or regulations, gross negligence, failure to observe accepted standards of administration or a pattern of misexpenditure. Such allocation reductions will come from administrative funds only.

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