

EFFECTIVE DATE

Pub. L. 97-248, title III, §357(c), Sept. 3, 1982, 96 Stat. 646, provided that: “The amendments made by this section [enacting this section and repealing section 7217 of this title] shall apply with respect to disclosures made after the date of enactment of this Act [Sept. 3, 1982].”

§ 7432. Civil damages for failure to release lien**(a) In general**

If any officer or employee of the Internal Revenue Service knowingly, or by reason of negligence, fails to release a lien under section 6325 on property of the taxpayer, such taxpayer may bring a civil action for damages against the United States in a district court of the United States.

(b) Damages

In any action brought under subsection (a), upon a finding of liability on the part of the defendant, the defendant shall be liable to the plaintiff in an amount equal to the sum of—

- (1) actual, direct economic damages sustained by the plaintiff which, but for the actions of the defendant, would not have been sustained, plus
- (2) the costs of the action.

(c) Payment authority

Claims pursuant to this section shall be payable out of funds appropriated under section 1304 of title 31, United States Code.

(d) Limitations**(1) Requirement that administrative remedies be exhausted**

A judgment for damages shall not be awarded under subsection (b) unless the court determines that the plaintiff has exhausted the administrative remedies available to such plaintiff within the Internal Revenue Service.

(2) Mitigation of damages

The amount of damages awarded under subsection (b)(1) shall be reduced by the amount of such damages which could have reasonably been mitigated by the plaintiff.

(3) Period for bringing action

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, an action to enforce liability created under this section may be brought without regard to the amount in controversy and may be brought only within 2 years after the date the right of action accrues.

(e) Notice of failure to release lien

The Secretary shall by regulation prescribe reasonable procedures for a taxpayer to notify the Secretary of the failure to release a lien under section 6325 on property of the taxpayer.

(Added Pub. L. 100-647, title VI, §6240(a), Nov. 10, 1988, 102 Stat. 3746.)

PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 7432 was renumbered 7437 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Pub. L. 100-647, title VI, §6240(c), Nov. 10, 1988, 102 Stat. 3747, provided that: “The amendments made by this section [enacting this section] shall apply to notices provided by the taxpayer of the failure to release a lien, and damages arising, after December 31, 1988.”

§ 7433. Civil damages for certain unauthorized collection actions**(a) In general**

If, in connection with any collection of Federal tax with respect to a taxpayer, any officer or employee of the Internal Revenue Service recklessly or intentionally, or by reason of negligence, disregards any provision of this title, or any regulation promulgated under this title, such taxpayer may bring a civil action for damages against the United States in a district court of the United States. Except as provided in section 7432, such civil action shall be the exclusive remedy for recovering damages resulting from such actions.

(b) Damages

In any action brought under subsection (a) or petition filed under subsection (e), upon a finding of liability on the part of the defendant, the defendant shall be liable to the plaintiff in an amount equal to the lesser of \$1,000,000 (\$100,000, in the case of negligence) or the sum of—

- (1) actual, direct economic damages sustained by the plaintiff as a proximate result of the reckless or intentional or negligent actions of the officer or employee, and
- (2) the costs of the action.

(c) Payment authority

Claims pursuant to this section shall be payable out of funds appropriated under section 1304 of title 31, United States Code.

(d) Limitations**(1) Requirement that administrative remedies be exhausted**

A judgment for damages shall not be awarded under subsection (b) unless the court determines that the plaintiff has exhausted the administrative remedies available to such plaintiff within the Internal Revenue Service.

(2) Mitigation of damages

The amount of damages awarded under subsection (b)(1) shall be reduced by the amount of such damages which could have reasonably been mitigated by the plaintiff.

(3) Period for bringing action

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, an action to enforce liability created under this section may be brought without regard to the amount in controversy and may be brought only within 2 years after the date the right of action accrues.

(e) Actions for violations of certain bankruptcy procedures**(1) In general**

If, in connection with any collection of Federal tax with respect to a taxpayer, any officer or employee of the Internal Revenue Service willfully violates any provision of section 362 (relating to automatic stay) or 524 (relating to effect of discharge) of title 11, United States Code (or any successor provision), or any regulation promulgated under such provision, such taxpayer may petition the bankruptcy court to recover damages against the United States.

(2) Remedy to be exclusive

(A) In general

Except as provided in subparagraph (B), notwithstanding section 105 of such title 11, such petition shall be the exclusive remedy for recovering damages resulting from such actions.

(B) Certain other actions permitted

Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to an action under section 362(h) of such title 11 for a violation of a stay provided by section 362 of such title; except that—

(i) administrative and litigation costs in connection with such an action may only be awarded under section 7430; and

(ii) administrative costs may be awarded only if incurred on or after the date that the bankruptcy petition is filed.

(Added Pub. L. 100-647, title VI, §6241(a), Nov. 10, 1988, 102 Stat. 3747; amended Pub. L. 104-168, title VIII, §§801(a), 802(a), July 30, 1996, 110 Stat. 1465; Pub. L. 105-206, title III, §3102(a), (c), July 22, 1998, 112 Stat. 730.)

PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 7433 was renumbered 7437 of this title.

AMENDMENTS

1998—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 105-206, §3102(a)(1)(A), inserted “, or by reason of negligence,” after “recklessly or intentionally”.

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 105-206, §3102(a)(1)(B)(i), (c)(2), in introductory provisions, inserted “or petition filed under subsection (e)” after “subsection (a)” and inserted “(\$100,000, in the case of negligence)” after “\$1,000,000”.

Subsec. (b)(1). Pub. L. 105-206, §3102(a)(1)(B)(ii), inserted “or negligent” after “reckless or intentional”.

Subsec. (d)(1). Pub. L. 105-206, §3102(a)(2), substituted “Requirement that administrative remedies be exhausted” for “Award for damages may be reduced if administrative remedies not exhausted” in heading and amended text of par. (1) generally. Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “The amount of damages awarded under subsection (b) may be reduced if the court determines that the plaintiff has not exhausted the administrative remedies available to such plaintiff within the Internal Revenue Service.”

Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 105-206, §3102(c)(1), added subsec. (e).

1996—Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 104-168, §801(a), substituted “\$1,000,000” for “\$100,000”.

Subsec. (d)(1). Pub. L. 104-168, §802(a), amended par. (1) generally. Prior to amendment, par. (1) read as follows:

“(1) REQUIREMENT THAT ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES BE EXHAUSTED.—A judgment for damages shall not be awarded under subsection (b) unless the court determines that the plaintiff has exhausted the administrative remedies available to such plaintiff within the Internal Revenue Service.”

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1998 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 105-206 applicable to actions of officers or employees of Internal Revenue Service after July 22, 1998, see section 3102(d) of Pub. L. 105-206, set out as a note under section 7426 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1996 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 104-168, title VIII, §801(b), July 30, 1996, 110 Stat. 1465, provided that: “The amendment made by subsection (a) [amending this section] shall apply to actions by officers or employees of the Internal Revenue Service after the date of the enactment of this Act [July 30, 1996].”

Pub. L. 104-168, title VIII, §802(b), July 30, 1996, 110 Stat. 1465, provided that: “The amendment made by this section [amending this section] shall apply in the case of proceedings commenced after the date of the enactment of this Act [July 30, 1996].”

§ 7433A. Civil damages for certain unauthorized collection actions by persons performing services under qualified tax collection contracts

(a) In general

Subject to the modifications provided by subsection (b), section 7433 shall apply to the acts and omissions of any person performing services under a qualified tax collection contract (as defined in section 6306(b)) to the same extent and in the same manner as if such person were an employee of the Internal Revenue Service.

(b) Modifications

For purposes of subsection (a):

(1) Any civil action brought under section 7433 by reason of this section shall be brought against the person who entered into the qualified tax collection contract with the Secretary and shall not be brought against the United States.

(2) Such person and not the United States shall be liable for any damages and costs determined in such civil action.

(3) Such civil action shall not be an exclusive remedy with respect to such person.

(4) Subsections (c), (d)(1), and (e) of section 7433 shall not apply.

(Added Pub. L. 108-357, title VIII, §881(b)(1), Oct. 22, 2004, 118 Stat. 1626.)

§ 7434. Civil damages for fraudulent filing of information returns

(a) In general

If any person willfully files a fraudulent information return with respect to payments purported to be made to any other person, such other person may bring a civil action for damages against the person so filing such return.

(b) Damages

In any action brought under subsection (a), upon a finding of liability on the part of the defendant, the defendant shall be liable to the plaintiff in an amount equal to the greater of \$5,000 or the sum of—

(1) any actual damages sustained by the plaintiff as a proximate result of the filing of the fraudulent information return (including any costs attributable to resolving deficiencies asserted as a result of such filing),

(2) the costs of the action, and

(3) in the court’s discretion, reasonable attorneys’ fees.

(c) Period for bringing action

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, an action to enforce the liability created under this section may be brought without regard to the amount in controversy and may be brought only within the later of—

(1) 6 years after the date of the filing of the fraudulent information return, or

(2) 1 year after the date such fraudulent information return would have been discovered by exercise of reasonable care.