

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective 180 days after Apr. 20, 2005, and not applicable with respect to cases commenced under this title before such effective date, except as otherwise provided, see section 1501 of Pub. L. 109-8, set out as an Effective Date of 2005 Amendment note under section 101 of this title.

SUBCHAPTER II—DEBTOR'S DUTIES AND
BENEFITS

§ 521. Debtor's duties

- (a) The debtor shall—
- (1) file—
 - (A) a list of creditors; and
 - (B) unless the court orders otherwise—
 - (i) a schedule of assets and liabilities;
 - (ii) a schedule of current income and current expenditures;
 - (iii) a statement of the debtor's financial affairs and, if section 342(b) applies, a certificate—
 - (I) of an attorney whose name is indicated on the petition as the attorney for the debtor, or a bankruptcy petition preparer signing the petition under section 110(b)(1), indicating that such attorney or the bankruptcy petition preparer delivered to the debtor the notice required by section 342(b); or
 - (II) if no attorney is so indicated, and no bankruptcy petition preparer signed the petition, of the debtor that such notice was received and read by the debtor;
 - (iv) copies of all payment advices or other evidence of payment received within 60 days before the date of the filing of the petition, by the debtor from any employer of the debtor;
 - (v) a statement of the amount of monthly net income, itemized to show how the amount is calculated; and
 - (vi) a statement disclosing any reasonably anticipated increase in income or expenditures over the 12-month period following the date of the filing of the petition;
 - (2) if an individual debtor's schedule of assets and liabilities includes debts which are secured by property of the estate—
 - (A) within thirty days after the date of the filing of a petition under chapter 7 of this title or on or before the date of the meeting of creditors, whichever is earlier, or within such additional time as the court, for cause, within such period fixes, file with the clerk a statement of his intention with respect to the retention or surrender of such property and, if applicable, specifying that such property is claimed as exempt, that the debtor intends to redeem such property, or that the debtor intends to reaffirm debts secured by such property; and
 - (B) within 30 days after the first date set for the meeting of creditors under section 341(a), or within such additional time as the court, for cause, within such 30-day period fixes, perform his intention with respect to such property, as specified by subparagraph (A) of this paragraph;

except that nothing in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of this paragraph shall alter the debtor's or the trustee's rights with regard to such property under this title, except as provided in section 362(h);

(3) if a trustee is serving in the case or an auditor is serving under section 586(f) of title 28, cooperate with the trustee as necessary to enable the trustee to perform the trustee's duties under this title;

(4) if a trustee is serving in the case or an auditor is serving under section 586(f) of title 28, surrender to the trustee all property of the estate and any recorded information, including books, documents, records, and papers, relating to property of the estate, whether or not immunity is granted under section 344 of this title;

(5) appear at the hearing required under section 524(d) of this title;

(6) in a case under chapter 7 of this title in which the debtor is an individual, not retain possession of personal property as to which a creditor has an allowed claim for the purchase price secured in whole or in part by an interest in such personal property unless the debtor, not later than 45 days after the first meeting of creditors under section 341(a), either—

(A) enters into an agreement with the creditor pursuant to section 524(c) with respect to the claim secured by such property; or

(B) redeems such property from the security interest pursuant to section 722; and

(7) unless a trustee is serving in the case, continue to perform the obligations required of the administrator (as defined in section 3 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974) of an employee benefit plan if at the time of the commencement of the case the debtor (or any entity designated by the debtor) served as such administrator.

If the debtor fails to so act within the 45-day period referred to in paragraph (6), the stay under section 362(a) is terminated with respect to the personal property of the estate or of the debtor which is affected, such property shall no longer be property of the estate, and the creditor may take whatever action as to such property as is permitted by applicable nonbankruptcy law, unless the court determines on the motion of the trustee filed before the expiration of such 45-day period, and after notice and a hearing, that such property is of consequential value or benefit to the estate, orders appropriate adequate protection of the creditor's interest, and orders the debtor to deliver any collateral in the debtor's possession to the trustee.

(b) In addition to the requirements under subsection (a), a debtor who is an individual shall file with the court—

(1) a certificate from the approved nonprofit budget and credit counseling agency that provided the debtor services under section 109(h) describing the services provided to the debtor; and

(2) a copy of the debt repayment plan, if any, developed under section 109(h) through the approved nonprofit budget and credit counseling agency referred to in paragraph (1).

(c) In addition to meeting the requirements under subsection (a), a debtor shall file with the court a record of any interest that a debtor has in an education individual retirement account (as defined in section 530(b)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986), an interest in an account in a qualified ABLE program (as defined in section 529A(b) of such Code,¹ or under a qualified State tuition program (as defined in section 529(b)(1) of such Code).

(d) If the debtor fails timely to take the action specified in subsection (a)(6) of this section, or in paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 362(h), with respect to property which a lessor or bailor owns and has leased, rented, or bailed to the debtor or as to which a creditor holds a security interest not otherwise voidable under section 522(f), 544, 545, 547, 548, or 549, nothing in this title shall prevent or limit the operation of a provision in the underlying lease or agreement that has the effect of placing the debtor in default under such lease or agreement by reason of the occurrence, pendency, or existence of a proceeding under this title or the insolvency of the debtor. Nothing in this subsection shall be deemed to justify limiting such a provision in any other circumstance.

(e)(1) If the debtor in a case under chapter 7 or 13 is an individual and if a creditor files with the court at any time a request to receive a copy of the petition, schedules, and statement of financial affairs filed by the debtor, then the court shall make such petition, such schedules, and such statement available to such creditor.

(2)(A) The debtor shall provide—

(i) not later than 7 days before the date first set for the first meeting of creditors, to the trustee a copy of the Federal income tax return required under applicable law (or at the election of the debtor, a transcript of such return) for the most recent tax year ending immediately before the commencement of the case and for which a Federal income tax return was filed; and

(ii) at the same time the debtor complies with clause (i), a copy of such return (or if elected under clause (i), such transcript) to any creditor that timely requests such copy.

(B) If the debtor fails to comply with clause (i) or (ii) of subparagraph (A), the court shall dismiss the case unless the debtor demonstrates that the failure to so comply is due to circumstances beyond the control of the debtor.

(C) If a creditor requests a copy of such tax return or such transcript and if the debtor fails to provide a copy of such tax return or such transcript to such creditor at the time the debtor provides such tax return or such transcript to the trustee, then the court shall dismiss the case unless the debtor demonstrates that the failure to provide a copy of such tax return or such transcript is due to circumstances beyond the control of the debtor.

(3) If a creditor in a case under chapter 13 files with the court at any time a request to receive a copy of the plan filed by the debtor, then the court shall make available to such creditor a copy of the plan—

(A) at a reasonable cost; and

(B) not later than 7 days after such request is filed.

(f) At the request of the court, the United States trustee, or any party in interest in a case under chapter 7, 11, or 13, a debtor who is an individual shall file with the court—

(1) at the same time filed with the taxing authority, a copy of each Federal income tax return required under applicable law (or at the election of the debtor, a transcript of such tax return) with respect to each tax year of the debtor ending while the case is pending under such chapter;

(2) at the same time filed with the taxing authority, each Federal income tax return required under applicable law (or at the election of the debtor, a transcript of such tax return) that had not been filed with such authority as of the date of the commencement of the case and that was subsequently filed for any tax year of the debtor ending in the 3-year period ending on the date of the commencement of the case;

(3) a copy of each amendment to any Federal income tax return or transcript filed with the court under paragraph (1) or (2); and

(4) in a case under chapter 13—

(A) on the date that is either 90 days after the end of such tax year or 1 year after the date of the commencement of the case, whichever is later, if a plan is not confirmed before such later date; and

(B) annually after the plan is confirmed and until the case is closed, not later than the date that is 45 days before the anniversary of the confirmation of the plan;

a statement, under penalty of perjury, of the income and expenditures of the debtor during the tax year of the debtor most recently concluded before such statement is filed under this paragraph, and of the monthly income of the debtor, that shows how income, expenditures, and monthly income are calculated.

(g)(1) A statement referred to in subsection (f)(4) shall disclose—

(A) the amount and sources of the income of the debtor;

(B) the identity of any person responsible with the debtor for the support of any dependent of the debtor; and

(C) the identity of any person who contributed, and the amount contributed, to the household in which the debtor resides.

(2) The tax returns, amendments, and statement of income and expenditures described in subsections (e)(2)(A) and (f) shall be available to the United States trustee (or the bankruptcy administrator, if any), the trustee, and any party in interest for inspection and copying, subject to the requirements of section 315(c) of the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005.

(h) If requested by the United States trustee or by the trustee, the debtor shall provide—

(1) a document that establishes the identity of the debtor, including a driver's license, passport, or other document that contains a photograph of the debtor; or

¹ So in original. A closing parenthesis probably should precede the comma.

(2) such other personal identifying information relating to the debtor that establishes the identity of the debtor.

(i)(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) and (4) and notwithstanding section 707(a), if an individual debtor in a voluntary case under chapter 7 or 13 fails to file all of the information required under subsection (a)(1) within 45 days after the date of the filing of the petition, the case shall be automatically dismissed effective on the 46th day after the date of the filing of the petition.

(2) Subject to paragraph (4) and with respect to a case described in paragraph (1), any party in interest may request the court to enter an order dismissing the case. If requested, the court shall enter an order of dismissal not later than 7 days after such request.

(3) Subject to paragraph (4) and upon request of the debtor made within 45 days after the date of the filing of the petition described in paragraph (1), the court may allow the debtor an additional period of not to exceed 45 days to file the information required under subsection (a)(1) if the court finds justification for extending the period for the filing.

(4) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subsection, on the motion of the trustee filed before the expiration of the applicable period of time specified in paragraph (1), (2), or (3), and after notice and a hearing, the court may decline to dismiss the case if the court finds that the debtor attempted in good faith to file all the information required by subsection (a)(1)(B)(iv) and that the best interests of creditors would be served by administration of the case.

(j)(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this title, if the debtor fails to file a tax return that becomes due after the commencement of the case or to properly obtain an extension of the due date for filing such return, the taxing authority may request that the court enter an order converting or dismissing the case.

(2) If the debtor does not file the required return or obtain the extension referred to in paragraph (1) within 90 days after a request is filed by the taxing authority under that paragraph, the court shall convert or dismiss the case, whichever is in the best interests of creditors and the estate.

(Pub. L. 95-598, Nov. 6, 1978, 92 Stat. 2586; Pub. L. 98-353, title III, §§305, 452, July 10, 1984, 98 Stat. 352, 375; Pub. L. 99-554, title II, §283(h), Oct. 27, 1986, 100 Stat. 3117; Pub. L. 109-8, title I, §106(d), title II, §225(b), title III, §§304(1), 305(2), 315(b), 316, title IV, §446(a), title VI, §603(c), title VII, §720, Apr. 20, 2005, 119 Stat. 38, 66, 78, 80, 89, 92, 118, 123, 133; Pub. L. 111-16, §2(5), (6), May 7, 2009, 123 Stat. 1607; Pub. L. 111-327, §2(a)(16), Dec. 22, 2010, 124 Stat. 3559; Pub. L. 113-295, div. B, title I, §104(c), Dec. 19, 2014, 128 Stat. 4064.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

LEGISLATIVE STATEMENTS

Section 521 of the House amendment modifies a comparable provision contained in the House bill and Senate amendment. The Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure should provide where the list of creditors is to be filed. In addition, the debtor is required to attend the hearing on discharge under section 524(d).

SENATE REPORT NO. 95-989

This section lists three duties of the debtor in a bankruptcy case. The Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure will specify the means of carrying out these duties. The first duty is to file with the court a list of creditors and, unless the court orders otherwise, a schedule of assets and liabilities and a statement of his financial affairs. Second, the debtor is required to cooperate with the trustee as necessary to enable the trustee to perform the trustee's duties. Finally, the debtor must surrender to the trustee all property of the estate, and any recorded information, including books, documents, records, and papers, relating to property of the estate. This phrase "recorded information, including books, documents, records, and papers," has been used here and throughout the bill as a more general term, and includes such other forms of recorded information as data in computer storage or in other machine readable forms.

The list in this section is not exhaustive of the debtor's duties. Others are listed elsewhere in proposed title 11, such as in section 343, which requires the debtor to submit to examination, or in the Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure, as continued by §404(a) of S. 2266, such as the duty to attend any hearing on discharge, Rule 402(2).

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

Section 3 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, referred to in subsec. (a)(7), is classified to section 1002 of Title 29, Labor.

Sections 530(b)(1), 529A(b), and 529(b)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, referred to in subsec. (c), are classified to sections 530(b)(1), 529A(b), and 529(b)(1), respectively, of Title 26, Internal Revenue Code.

Section 315(c) of the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005, referred to in subsec. (g)(2), is section 315(c) of Pub. L. 109-8, which is set out as a note under this section.

AMENDMENTS

2014—Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 113-295 inserted "an interest in an account in a qualified ABLE program (as defined in section 529A(b) of such Code," after "Internal Revenue Code of 1986)".

2010—Subsec. (a)(2). Pub. L. 111-327, §2(a)(16)(A)(iii), in subpar. (C) substituted "except that" for subpar. (C) designation.

Subsec. (a)(2)(A). Pub. L. 111-327, §2(a)(16)(A)(i), struck out "the debtor shall" after "period fixes," and inserted "and" after semicolon at end.

Subsec. (a)(2)(B). Pub. L. 111-327, §2(a)(16)(A)(ii), struck out "the debtor shall" after "period fixes," and "and" after semicolon at end.

Subsec. (a)(3), (4). Pub. L. 111-327, §2(a)(16)(B), inserted "is" after "auditor".

2009—Subsec. (e)(3)(B). Pub. L. 111-16, §2(5), substituted "7 days" for "5 days".

Subsec. (i)(2). Pub. L. 111-16, §2(6), substituted "7 days" for "5 days".

2005—Pub. L. 109-8, §106(d)(1), designated existing provisions as subsec. (a).

Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 109-8, §304(1), added concluding provisions.

Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 109-8, §315(b)(1), amended par. (1) generally. Prior to amendment, par. (1) read as follows: "file a list of creditors, and unless the court orders otherwise, a schedule of assets and liabilities, a schedule of current income and current expenditures, and a statement of the debtor's financial affairs;"

Subsec. (a)(2). Pub. L. 109-8, §305(2)(A), struck out "consumer" before "debts" in introductory provisions.

Subsec. (a)(2)(B). Pub. L. 109-8, §305(2)(B), substituted "30 days after the first date set for the meeting of creditors under section 341(a)" for "forty-five days after the filing of a notice of intent under this section" and "30-day" for "forty-five day".

Subsec. (a)(2)(C). Pub. L. 109-8, §305(2)(C), inserted “, except as provided in section 362(h)” before semicolon.

Subsec. (a)(3), (4). Pub. L. 109-8, §603(c), inserted “or an auditor serving under section 586(f) of title 28” after “serving in the case”.

Subsec. (a)(6). Pub. L. 109-8, §304(1), added par. (6).

Subsec. (a)(7). Pub. L. 109-8, §446(a), added par. (7).

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 109-8, §106(d)(2), added subsec. (b).

Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 109-8, §225(b), added subsec. (c).

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 109-8, §305(2)(D), added subsec. (d).

Subsecs. (e) to (h). Pub. L. 109-8, §315(b)(2), added subsecs. (e) to (h).

Subsec. (i). Pub. L. 109-8, §316, added subsec. (i).

Subsec. (j). Pub. L. 109-8, §720, added subsec. (j).

1986—Par. (4). Pub. L. 99-554 inserted “, whether or not immunity is granted under section 344 of this title” after second reference to “estate”.

1984—Par. (1). Pub. L. 98-353, §305(2), inserted “a schedule of current income and current expenditures,” after “liabilities.”

Pars. (2) to (5). Pub. L. 98-353, §305(1), (3), added par. (2), redesignated former pars. (2) to (4) as (3) to (5), respectively.

Pub. L. 98-353, §452, which directed the insertion of “, whether or not immunity is granted under section 344 of this title” after second reference to “estate” in par. (3) as redesignated above, could not be executed because such reference appeared in par. (4) rather than in par. (3).

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2014 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 113-295, div. B, title I, §104(d), Dec. 19, 2014, 128 Stat. 4064, provided that: “The amendments made by this section [amending this section and sections 541 and 707 of this title] shall apply with respect to cases commenced under title 11, United States Code, on or after the date of the enactment of this Act [Dec. 19, 2014].”

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2009 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 111-16 effective Dec. 1, 2009, see section 7 of Pub. L. 111-16, set out as a note under section 109 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2005 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 109-8, title VI, §603(e), Apr. 20, 2005, 119 Stat. 123, provided that: “The amendments made by this section [amending this section, section 727 of this title and section 586 of Title 28, Judiciary and Judicial Procedure, and enacting provisions set out as a note under section 586 of Title 28] shall take effect 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act [Apr. 20, 2005].”

Amendment by sections 106(d), 225(b), 304(1), 305(2), 315(b), 316, 446(a), and 720 of Pub. L. 109-8 effective 180 days after Apr. 20, 2005, and not applicable with respect to cases commenced under this title before such effective date, except as otherwise provided, see section 1501 of Pub. L. 109-8, set out as a note under section 101 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1986 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 99-554 effective 30 days after Oct. 27, 1986, see section 302(a) of Pub. L. 99-554, set out as a note under section 581 of Title 28, Judiciary and Judicial Procedure.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1984 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 98-353 effective with respect to cases filed 90 days after July 10, 1984, see section 552(a) of Pub. L. 98-353, set out as a note under section 101 of this title.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF TAX INFORMATION

Pub. L. 109-8, title III, §315(c), Apr. 20, 2005, 119 Stat. 91, provided that:

“(1) Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act [Apr. 20, 2005], the Director of the

Administrative Office of the United States Courts shall establish procedures for safeguarding the confidentiality of any tax information required to be provided under this section.

“(2) The procedures under paragraph (1) shall include restrictions on creditor access to tax information that is required to be provided under this section.

“(3) Not later than 540 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts shall prepare and submit to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives a report that—

“(A) assesses the effectiveness of the procedures established under paragraph (1); and

“(B) if appropriate, includes proposed legislation to—

“(i) further protect the confidentiality of tax information; and

“(ii) provide penalties for the improper use by any person of the tax information required to be provided under this section.”

PROVIDING REQUESTED TAX DOCUMENTS TO THE COURT

Pub. L. 109-8, title XII, §1228, Apr. 20, 2005, 119 Stat. 200, provided that:

“(a) CHAPTER 7 CASES.—The court shall not grant a discharge in the case of an individual who is a debtor in a case under chapter 7 of title 11, United States Code, unless requested tax documents have been provided to the court.

“(b) CHAPTER 11 AND CHAPTER 13 CASES.—The court shall not confirm a plan of reorganization in the case of an individual under chapter 11 or 13 of title 11, United States Code, unless requested tax documents have been filed with the court.

“(c) DOCUMENT RETENTION.—The court shall destroy documents submitted in support of a bankruptcy claim not sooner than 3 years after the date of the conclusion of a case filed by an individual under chapter 7, 11, or 13 of title 11, United States Code. In the event of a pending audit or enforcement action, the court may extend the time for destruction of such requested tax documents.”

§ 522. Exemptions

(a) In this section—

(1) “dependent” includes spouse, whether or not actually dependent; and

(2) “value” means fair market value as of the date of the filing of the petition or, with respect to property that becomes property of the estate after such date, as of the date such property becomes property of the estate.

(b)(1) Notwithstanding section 541 of this title, an individual debtor may exempt from property of the estate the property listed in either paragraph (2) or, in the alternative, paragraph (3) of this subsection. In joint cases filed under section 302 of this title and individual cases filed under section 301 or 303 of this title by or against debtors who are husband and wife, and whose estates are ordered to be jointly administered under Rule 1015(b) of the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure, one debtor may not elect to exempt property listed in paragraph (2) and the other debtor elect to exempt property listed in paragraph (3) of this subsection. If the parties cannot agree on the alternative to be elected, they shall be deemed to elect paragraph (2), where such election is permitted under the law of the jurisdiction where the case is filed.

(2) Property listed in this paragraph is property that is specified under subsection (d), unless the State law that is applicable to the debt-