

63A-3-507 Administrative garnishment order.

- (1) If a judgment is entered against a debtor, the office may, subject to Subsection (2), issue an administrative garnishment order against the debtor's personal property and wages in the possession of a third party in the same manner and with the same effect as if the order was a writ of garnishment issued in district court.
- (2) The office may issue the administrative garnishment order if:
 - (a) the order is:
 - (i) signed by the director or the director's designee; and
 - (ii) served by certified mail, return receipt requested, or as prescribed by Rule 4, Utah Rules of Civil Procedure; and
 - (b)
 - (i) the underlying debt is for nonpayment of restitution as defined in Section 77-38a-102; or
 - (ii) the underlying debt is for nonpayment of an order for payment issued by the Labor Commission, established in Section 34A-1-103, for wage claims.
- (3) An administrative garnishment order issued in accordance with this section is subject to the procedures and due process protections provided by Rule 64D, Utah Rules of Civil Procedure, except as provided by Section 70C-7-103.
- (4) An administrative garnishment order issued by the office shall:
 - (a) contain a statement that includes:
 - (i) if known:
 - (A) the nature, location, account number, and estimated value of the property; and
 - (B) the name, address, and phone number of the person holding the property;
 - (ii) whether any of the property consists of earnings;
 - (iii) the amount of the judgment and the amount due on the judgment;
 - (iv) the name, address, and phone number of any person known to the plaintiff to claim an interest in the property; and
 - (v) that the plaintiff has attached or will serve the garnishee fee established in Section 78A-2-216;
 - (b) identify the defendant, including:
 - (i) the defendant's name and address; and
 - (ii) if known:
 - (A) the last four digits of the defendant's Social Security number;
 - (B) the last four digits of the defendant's driver license; and
 - (C) the state in which the driver license was issued;
 - (c) include one or more interrogatories inquiring:
 - (i) whether the garnishee is indebted to the defendant and, if so, the nature of the indebtedness;
 - (ii) whether the garnishee possesses or controls any property of the defendant, and, if so, the nature, location, and estimated value of the property;
 - (iii)
 - (A) whether the garnishee knows of any property of the defendant in the possession or under the control of another; and
 - (B) the nature, location, and estimated value of the defendant's property in possession or under the control of another, and the name, address, and phone number of the person with possession or control;
 - (iv) whether the garnishee is deducting a liquidated amount in satisfaction of a claim against the plaintiff or the defendant, a designation as to whom the claim relates, and the amount deducted;

- (v) the date and manner of the garnishee's service of papers upon the defendant and any third party;
 - (vi) the dates on which previously served writs of continuing garnishment were served, if any; and
 - (vii) any other relevant information the office may request, including the defendant's position, rate, and method of compensation, pay period, or computation of the amount of the defendant's disposable earnings;
 - (d) notify the defendant of the defendant's right to reply to answers and request a hearing as provided by Rule 64D, Utah Rules of Civil Procedure; and
 - (e) state where the garnishee may deliver property.
- (5)
- (a) A garnishee who acts in accordance with this section and the administrative garnishment issued by the office is released from liability unless an answer to an interrogatory is successfully controverted.
 - (b) Except as provided in Subsection (5)(c), if the garnishee fails to comply with an administrative garnishment issued by the office without a court or final administrative order directing otherwise, the garnishee is liable to the office for an amount ordered by the court, including:
 - (i) the value of the property or the value of the judgment, whichever is less;
 - (ii) reasonable costs; and
 - (iii) attorney fees incurred by the parties as a result of the garnishee's failure.
 - (c) If the garnishee shows that the steps taken to secure the property were reasonable, the court may excuse the garnishee's liability in whole or in part.
- (6) A creditor who files a motion for an order to show cause under this section shall attach to the motion a statement that the creditor has in good faith conferred or attempted to confer with the garnishee in an effort to settle the issue without court action.
- (7) A person is not liable as a garnishee for drawing, accepting, making, or endorsing a negotiable instrument if the instrument is not in the possession or control of the garnishee at the time of service of the administrative garnishment order.
- (8)
- (a) A person indebted to the defendant may pay to the office the amount of the debt or an amount to satisfy the administrative garnishment.
 - (b) The office's receipt of an amount described in Subsection (8)(a) discharges the debtor for the amount paid.
- (9) A garnishee may deduct from the property any liquidated claim against the defendant.
- (10)
- (a) If a debt to the garnishee is secured by property, the office:
 - (i) is not required to apply the property to the debt when the office issues the administrative garnishment order; and
 - (ii) may obtain a court order authorizing the office to buy the debt and requiring the garnishee to deliver the property.
 - (b) Notwithstanding Subsection (10)(a)(i):
 - (i) the administrative garnishment order remains in effect; and
 - (ii) the office may apply the property to the debt.
 - (c) The office or a third party may perform an obligation of the defendant and require the garnishee to deliver the property upon completion of performance or, if performance is refused, upon tender of performance if:
 - (i) the obligation is secured by property; and
 - (ii)

(A) the obligation does not require the personal performance of the defendant; and

(B) a third party may perform the obligation.

(11)

(a) The office may issue a continuing garnishment order against a nonexempt periodic payment.

(b) This section is subject to the Utah Exemptions Act.

(c) A continuing garnishment order issued in accordance with this section applies to payments to the defendant from the date of service upon the garnishee until the earlier of the following:

(i) the last periodic payment;

(ii) the judgment upon which the administrative garnishment order is issued is stayed, vacated, or satisfied in full; or

(iii) the office releases the order.

(d) No later than seven days after the last day of each payment period, the garnishee shall with respect to that period:

(i) answer each interrogatory;

(ii) serve an answer to each interrogatory on the office, the defendant, and any other person who has a recorded interest in the property; and

(iii) deliver the property to the office.

(e) If the office issues a continuing garnishment order during the term of a writ of continuing garnishment issued by the district court, the order issued by the office:

(i) is tolled when a writ of garnishment or other income withholding is already in effect and is withholding greater than or equal to the maximum portion of disposable earnings described in Subsection (12);

(ii) is collected in the amount of the difference between the maximum portion of disposable earnings described in Subsection (12) and the amount being garnished by an existing writ of continuing garnishment if the maximum portion of disposable earnings exceed the existing writ of garnishment or other income withholding; and

(iii) shall take priority upon the termination of the current term of existing writs.

(12) The maximum portion of disposable earnings of an individual subject to seizure in accordance with this section is the lesser of:

(a) 25% of the defendant's disposable earnings for any other judgment; or

(b) the amount by which the defendant's disposable earnings for a pay period exceeds the number of weeks in that pay period multiplied by 30 times the federal minimum wage as provided in 29 U.S.C. Sec. 201 et seq., Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938.

(13) The administrative garnishment instituted in accordance with this section shall continue to operate and require that a person withhold the nonexempt portion of earnings at each succeeding earning disbursement interval until the total amount due in the garnishment is withheld or the garnishment is released in writing by the court or office.

Enacted by Chapter 69, 2013 General Session