

REAFFIRMATION AGREEMENTS **INFORMATION FOR CHAPTER 7 DEBTORS**

Provided as a service of the Hawaii Bankruptcy Bar Association

IMPORTANT! This information is intended to provide debtors with a general understanding of reaffirmation agreements and does not constitute legal advice. Reaffirming a debt has serious consequences. If you are a debtor in a Chapter 7 case, you should consult an attorney who is familiar with bankruptcy law and procedures and who can provide legal advice based on your particular financial situation.

What is a reaffirmation agreement?

Debtors usually file Chapter 7 bankruptcy cases in order to obtain a “discharge.” This is a bankruptcy court order that eliminates the debtor’s personal liability for most debts. A reaffirmation in bankruptcy is a voluntary agreement between a chapter 7 debtor and a creditor which basically provides that the debtor’s debts to that creditor will not be discharged. In agreeing to reaffirm a debt owed to the creditor, you promise to continue paying that debt even though you would not be required to repay it after you receive a discharge in your bankruptcy case. In return, the creditor agrees to not take certain actions, such as repossessing the vehicle securing a car loan, so long as you continue making payments and complying with the loan agreement.

Why would I agree to reaffirm?

In most instances, debtors should NOT reaffirm any debts. There are a few situations, however, when reaffirmation may be a good idea. For example, secured creditors – to whom you provided collateral such as a car or real estate in order to borrow money - usually have the right to seize the property securing an underlying debt even after a discharge is granted and the bankruptcy case is completed. Depending on your specific circumstances, you may agree to pay all or a portion of the money still owed so that you can keep the property. (Sometimes creditors will agree to modify the debt in connection with a reaffirmation.)

Why would I not reaffirm?

You should not reaffirm a debt if you cannot afford to make the payments described in the reaffirmation agreement, or if it involves something you don’t really need. For example: you reaffirm a car loan that you truly can’t afford; after the bankruptcy case is complete, you default and the lender repossesses your car; say the car was sold for \$7,000.00 but you owe \$12,000.00 on the loan, you will still be responsible for the \$5,000.00 balance—IF you reaffirmed the loan.

Are there alternatives to reaffirmation?

At the beginning of the case, a Chapter 7 debtor with secured debt is required to file a “Chapter 7 Individual Debtor’s Statement of Intention.” If you state on this form that you wish to retain the property securing a debt, you must indicate whether you intend to (1) reaffirm the debt or (2) “redeem” the property by paying the creditor a lump sum for its value. There may be other options for which you should consult an attorney. As an alternative, you may indicate that you intend to surrender or turn over the property to the creditor instead of making any payments.

How do I reaffirm a debt?

A creditor typically will prepare a reaffirmation agreement for you to sign. If you have an attorney in your bankruptcy case, your attorney should assist you in negotiating the terms of the agreement.

Are there forms for reaffirmations?

Yes. The standard form posted at the website of the United States Courts (<http://www.uscourts.gov/forms/bankruptcy-forms>) contains the information required by bankruptcy law. The Bankruptcy Code requires that reaffirmation agreements contain extensive disclosures to protect debtors. Among other things, the disclosures must advise you of the amount of the debt being reaffirmed, how it is calculated, and the interest rate, and that reaffirmation means that your personal liability for that debt will not be discharged in the bankruptcy.

As you can see in the attachment to this information, there are several parts to the reaffirmation agreement.

- Part A: Disclosures, Instructions, and Notice to Debtor
- Part B: Reaffirmation Agreement
- Part C: Certification by Debtor’s Attorney (if you have one)
- Part D: Debtor’s Statement in Support of Reaffirmation Agreement
- Part E: Motion for Court Approval (if approval is required)

An additional form, Cover Sheet for Reaffirmation Agreement, summarizes the terms of the agreement and reports your income and expenses. This information will help the court in deciding whether you can afford the payments.

Who files the reaffirmation agreement and cover sheet?

Either you or the creditor may submit the documents to the court for filing.

Is there a deadline to file a reaffirmation agreement?

Yes. The reaffirmation agreement must be filed before the entry of your discharge and not later than 60 days after the date of your first meeting of creditors. You may request the court to delay entering your discharge and to extend the filing deadline. A form motion (Debtor’s Motion to Defer Entry of Discharge and Enlarge Time to File Reaffirmation Agreement) is available at the Hawaii Bankruptcy Court’s website. If you wish to extend the deadline, make sure to file the motion before your discharge is entered.

Does the court need to approve the reaffirmation agreement?

Generally, your agreement becomes effective upon its timely filing with the court if (1) you were represented by an attorney in negotiating the reaffirmation agreement and the attorney completes the certification in Part C of the form agreement, or (2) the creditor is a credit union. [In the District of Hawaii, the court generally will not approve the reaffirmation of consumer debt secured by real property (such as a mortgage) because it is unnecessary.]

Why would the court not approve a voluntary reaffirmation agreement?

The court may not approve a reaffirmation agreement if it creates an “undue hardship” on you or your dependents, (for example, if you cannot really afford the payments). However, your bankruptcy discharge does not prevent you from voluntarily repaying any debt.

Do I need to come to court for a hearing?

If it appears court approval is necessary and that reaffirming a debt may cause you an undue hardship, you may be required to come to a hearing and explain why you need the property and why you think you can afford the payments. It is possible to participate in the hearing by phone.

Can I cancel a reaffirmation agreement once it’s been filed?

The law allows you to change your mind and “rescind” a reaffirmation agreement. However, you must do this before: (1) the entry of your discharge or (2) expiration of the 60-day period after the date the agreement was filed, whichever of these two events occurs later. The better course is to make sure you read and understand all the terms of the reaffirmation before signing, as well as consider whether you really need the property and can afford the payments.

<input type="checkbox"/> Presumption of Undue Hardship <input type="checkbox"/> No Presumption of Undue Hardship (Check box as directed in Part D: Debtor's Statement in Support of Reaffirmation Agreement.)

UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT

District of _____

In re _____,
Debtor

Case No. _____
Chapter _____

REAFFIRMATION AGREEMENT

[Indicate all documents included in this filing by checking each applicable box.]

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Part A: Disclosures, Instructions, and Notice to Debtor (pages 1 - 5) | <input type="checkbox"/> Part D: Debtor's Statement in Support of Reaffirmation Agreement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Part B: Reaffirmation Agreement | <input type="checkbox"/> Part E: Motion for Court Approval |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Part C: Certification by Debtor's Attorney | |

[Note: Complete Part E only if debtor was not represented by an attorney during the course of negotiating this agreement. Note also: If you complete Part E, you must prepare and file Form 2400C ALT - Order on Reaffirmation Agreement.]

Name of Creditor: _____

- [Check this box if]* Creditor is a Credit Union as defined in §19(b)(1)(a)(iv) of the Federal Reserve Act

PART A: DISCLOSURE STATEMENT, INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTICE TO DEBTOR

1. DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Before Agreeing to Reaffirm a Debt, Review These Important Disclosures:

SUMMARY OF REAFFIRMATION AGREEMENT

This Summary is made pursuant to the requirements of the Bankruptcy Code.

AMOUNT REAFFIRMED

The amount of debt you have agreed to reaffirm: \$ _____

The amount of debt you have agreed to reaffirm includes all fees and costs (if any) that have accrued as of the date of this disclosure. Your credit agreement may obligate you to pay additional amounts which may come due after the date of this disclosure. Consult your credit agreement.

ANNUAL PERCENTAGE RATE

[The annual percentage rate can be disclosed in different ways, depending on the type of debt.]

a. If the debt is an extension of “credit” under an “open end credit plan,” as those terms are defined in § 103 of the Truth in Lending Act, such as a credit card, the creditor may disclose the annual percentage rate shown in (i) below or, to the extent this rate is not readily available or not applicable, the simple interest rate shown in (ii) below, or both.

(i) The Annual Percentage Rate disclosed, or that would have been disclosed, to the debtor in the most recent periodic statement prior to entering into the reaffirmation agreement described in Part B below or, if no such periodic statement was given to the debtor during the prior six months, the annual percentage rate as it would have been so disclosed at the time of the disclosure statement: _____%.

--- And/Or ---

(ii) The simple interest rate applicable to the amount reaffirmed as of the date this disclosure statement is given to the debtor: _____%. If different simple interest rates apply to different balances included in the amount reaffirmed, the amount of each balance and the rate applicable to it are:

- \$ _____ @ _____ %;
- \$ _____ @ _____ %;
- \$ _____ @ _____ %.

b. If the debt is an extension of credit other than under than an open end credit plan, the creditor may disclose the annual percentage rate shown in (I) below, or, to the extent this rate is not readily available or not applicable, the simple interest rate shown in (ii) below, or both.

(i) The Annual Percentage Rate under §128(a)(4) of the Truth in Lending Act, as disclosed to the debtor in the most recent disclosure statement given to the debtor prior to entering into the reaffirmation agreement with respect to the debt or, if no such disclosure statement was given to the debtor, the annual percentage rate as it would have been so disclosed: _____%.

--- And/Or ---

(ii) The simple interest rate applicable to the amount reaffirmed as of the date this disclosure statement is given to the debtor: _____%. If different simple interest rates apply to different balances included in the amount reaffirmed, the amount of each balance and the rate applicable to it are:

\$ _____ @ _____ %;
 \$ _____ @ _____ %;
 \$ _____ @ _____ %.

c. If the underlying debt transaction was disclosed as a variable rate transaction on the most recent disclosure given under the Truth in Lending Act:

The interest rate on your loan may be a variable interest rate which changes from time to time, so that the annual percentage rate disclosed here may be higher or lower.

d. If the reaffirmed debt is secured by a security interest or lien, which has not been waived or determined to be void by a final order of the court, the following items or types of items of the debtor’s goods or property remain subject to such security interest or lien in connection with the debt or debts being reaffirmed in the reaffirmation agreement described in Part B.

<u>Item or Type of Item</u>	<u>Original Purchase Price or Original Amount of Loan</u>
-----------------------------	---

Optional---At the election of the creditor, a repayment schedule using one or a combination of the following may be provided:

Repayment Schedule:

Your first payment in the amount of \$ _____ is due on _____ (date), but the future payment amount may be different. Consult your reaffirmation agreement or credit agreement, as applicable.

— Or —

Your payment schedule will be: _____ (number) payments in the amount of \$ _____ each, payable (monthly, annually, weekly, etc.) on the _____ (day) of each _____ (week, month, etc.), unless altered later by mutual agreement in writing.

— Or —

A reasonably specific description of the debtor’s repayment obligations to the extent known by the creditor or creditor’s representative.

2. INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTICE TO DEBTOR

Reaffirming a debt is a serious financial decision. The law requires you to take certain steps to make sure the decision is in your best interest. If these steps are not completed, the reaffirmation agreement is not effective, even though you have signed it.

1. Read the disclosures in this Part A carefully. Consider the decision to reaffirm carefully. Then, if you want to reaffirm, sign the reaffirmation agreement in Part B (or you may use a separate agreement you and your creditor agree on).

2. Complete and sign Part D and be sure you can afford to make the payments you are agreeing to make and have received a copy of the disclosure statement and a completed and signed reaffirmation agreement.

3. If you were represented by an attorney during the negotiation of your reaffirmation agreement, the attorney must have signed the certification in Part C.

4. If you were not represented by an attorney during the negotiation of your reaffirmation agreement, you must have completed and signed Part E.

5. The original of this disclosure must be filed with the court by you or your creditor. If a separate reaffirmation agreement (other than the one in Part B) has been signed, it must be attached.

6. If the creditor is not a Credit Union and you were represented by an attorney during the negotiation of your reaffirmation agreement, your reaffirmation agreement becomes effective upon filing with the court unless the reaffirmation is presumed to be an undue hardship as explained in Part D. If the creditor is a Credit Union and you were represented by an attorney during the negotiation of your reaffirmation agreement, your reaffirmation agreement becomes effective upon filing with the court.

7. If you were not represented by an attorney during the negotiation of your reaffirmation agreement, it will not be effective unless the court approves it. The court will notify you and the creditor of the hearing on your reaffirmation agreement. You must attend this hearing in bankruptcy court where the judge will review your reaffirmation agreement. The bankruptcy court must approve your reaffirmation agreement as consistent with your best interests, except that no court approval is required if your reaffirmation agreement is for a consumer debt secured by a mortgage, deed of trust, security deed, or other lien on your real property, like your home.

YOUR RIGHT TO RESCIND (CANCEL) YOUR REAFFIRMATION AGREEMENT

You may rescind (cancel) your reaffirmation agreement at any time before the bankruptcy court enters a discharge order, or before the expiration of the 60-day period that begins on the date your reaffirmation agreement is filed with the court, whichever occurs later. To rescind (cancel) your reaffirmation agreement, you must notify the creditor that your reaffirmation agreement is rescinded (or canceled).

Frequently Asked Questions:

What are your obligations if you reaffirm the debt? A reaffirmed debt remains your personal legal obligation. It is not discharged in your bankruptcy case. That means that if you default on your reaffirmed debt after your bankruptcy case is over, your creditor may be able to take your property or your wages. Otherwise, your obligations will be determined by the reaffirmation agreement which may have changed the terms of the original agreement. For example, if you are reaffirming an open end credit agreement, the creditor may be permitted by that agreement or applicable law to change the terms of that agreement in the future under certain conditions.

Are you required to enter into a reaffirmation agreement by any law? No, you are not required to reaffirm a debt by any law. Only agree to reaffirm a debt if it is in your best interest. Be sure you can afford the payments you agree to make.

What if your creditor has a security interest or lien? Your bankruptcy discharge does not eliminate any lien on your property. A “lien” is often referred to as a security interest, deed of trust, mortgage or security deed. Even if you do not reaffirm and your personal liability on the debt is discharged, because of the lien your creditor may still have the right to take the property securing the lien if you do not pay the debt or default on it. If the lien is on an item of personal property that is exempt under your State’s law or that the trustee has abandoned, you may be able to redeem the item rather than reaffirm the debt. To redeem, you must make a single payment to the creditor equal to the amount of the allowed secured claim, as agreed by the parties or determined by the court.

NOTE: When this disclosure refers to what a creditor “may” do, it does not use the word “may” to give the creditor specific permission. The word “may” is used to tell you what might occur if the law permits the creditor to take the action. If you have questions about your reaffirming a debt or what the law requires, consult with the attorney who helped you negotiate this agreement reaffirming a debt. If you don’t have an attorney helping you, the judge will explain the effect of your reaffirming a debt when the hearing on the reaffirmation agreement is held.

PART B: REAFFIRMATION AGREEMENT.

I (we) agree to reaffirm the debts arising under the credit agreement described below.

1. Brief description of credit agreement:

2. Description of any changes to the credit agreement made as part of this reaffirmation agreement:

SIGNATURE(S):

Borrower:

Accepted by creditor:

(Print Name)

(Printed Name of Creditor)

(Signature)

(Address of Creditor)

Date: _____

(Signature)

Co-borrower, if also reaffirming these debts:

(Printed Name and Title of Individual Signing for Creditor)

(Print Name)

Date of creditor acceptance:

(Signature)

Date: _____

PART C: CERTIFICATION BY DEBTOR'S ATTORNEY (IF ANY).

[To be filed only if the attorney represented the debtor during the course of negotiating this agreement.]

I hereby certify that (1) this agreement represents a fully informed and voluntary agreement by the debtor; (2) this agreement does not impose an undue hardship on the debtor or any dependent of the debtor; and (3) I have fully advised the debtor of the legal effect and consequences of this agreement and any default under this agreement.

[Check box, if applicable and the creditor is not a Credit Union.] A presumption of undue hardship has been established with respect to this agreement. In my opinion, however, the debtor is able to make the required payment.

Printed Name of Debtor's Attorney: _____

Signature of Debtor's Attorney: _____

Date: _____

PART D: DEBTOR’S STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF REAFFIRMATION AGREEMENT

*[Read and complete sections 1 and 2, **OR**, if the creditor is a Credit Union and the debtor is represented by an attorney, read section 3. Sign the appropriate signature line(s) and date your signature. If you complete sections 1 and 2 **and** your income less monthly expenses does not leave enough to make the payments under this reaffirmation agreement, check the box at the top of page 1 indicating “Presumption of Undue Hardship.” Otherwise, check the box at the top of page 1 indicating “No Presumption of Undue Hardship”]*

1. I believe this reaffirmation agreement will not impose an undue hardship on my dependents or me. I can afford to make the payments on the reaffirmed debt because my monthly income (take home pay plus any other income received) is \$_____, and my actual current monthly expenses including monthly payments on post-bankruptcy debt and other reaffirmation agreements total \$_____, leaving \$_____ to make the required payments on this reaffirmed debt.

I understand that if my income less my monthly expenses does not leave enough to make the payments, this reaffirmation agreement is presumed to be an undue hardship on me and must be reviewed by the court. However, this presumption may be overcome if I explain to the satisfaction of the court how I can afford to make the payments here: _____

(Use an additional page if needed for a full explanation.)

2. I received a copy of the Reaffirmation Disclosure Statement in Part A and a completed and signed reaffirmation agreement.

Signed: _____
(Debtor)

(Joint Debtor, if any)

Date: _____

— Or —

[If the creditor is a Credit Union and the debtor is represented by an attorney]

3. I believe this reaffirmation agreement is in my financial interest. I can afford to make the payments on the reaffirmed debt. I received a copy of the Reaffirmation Disclosure Statement in Part A and a completed and signed reaffirmation agreement.

Signed: _____
(Debtor)

(Joint Debtor, if any)

Date: _____

PART E: MOTION FOR COURT APPROVAL

[To be completed and filed only if the debtor is not represented by an attorney during the course of negotiating this agreement.]

MOTION FOR COURT APPROVAL OF REAFFIRMATION AGREEMENT

I (we), the debtor(s), affirm the following to be true and correct:

I am not represented by an attorney in connection with this reaffirmation agreement.

I believe this reaffirmation agreement is in my best interest based on the income and expenses I have disclosed in my Statement in Support of this reaffirmation agreement, and because (provide any additional relevant reasons the court should consider):

Therefore, I ask the court for an order approving this reaffirmation agreement under the following provisions (*check all applicable boxes*):

- 11 U.S.C. § 524(c)(6) (debtor is not represented by an attorney during the course of the negotiation of the reaffirmation agreement)
- 11 U.S.C. § 524(m) (presumption of undue hardship has arisen because monthly expenses exceed monthly income)

Signed: _____
(Debtor)

(Joint Debtor, if any)

Date: _____

UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
_____ **District of** _____

In re _____,
Debtor

Case No. _____

Chapter _____

MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF REAFFIRMATION AGREEMENT

I (we), the debtor(s), affirm the following to be true and correct:

I am not represented by an attorney in connection with this reaffirmation agreement.

I believe this reaffirmation agreement is in my best interest based on the income and expenses I have disclosed in my Statement in Support of Reaffirmation Agreement, and because *(provide any additional relevant reasons the court should consider):*

Therefore, I ask the court for an order approving this reaffirmation agreement under the following provisions *(check all applicable boxes):*

- 11 U.S.C. § 524(c)(6) (debtor is not represented by an attorney during the course of the negotiation of the reaffirmation agreement)
- 11 U.S.C. § 524(m) (presumption of undue hardship has arisen because monthly expenses exceed monthly income, as explained in Part II of Form B2400A, Reaffirmation Documents)

Signed: _____
(Debtor)

(Joint Debtor, if any)

Date: _____

Fill in this information to identify your case:

Debtor 1 _____
First Name Middle Name Last Name

Debtor 2 _____
 (Spouse, if filing) First Name Middle Name Last Name

United States Bankruptcy Court for the: _____ District of _____
(State)

Case number _____
 (If known)

Official Form 427

Cover Sheet for Reaffirmation Agreement

12/15

Anyone who is a party to a reaffirmation agreement may fill out and file this form. Fill it out completely, attach it to the reaffirmation agreement, and file the documents within the time set under Bankruptcy Rule 4008.

Part 1: Explain the Repayment Terms of the Reaffirmation Agreement

1. **Who is the creditor?** _____
Name of the creditor

2. **How much is the debt?** On the date that the bankruptcy case is filed \$ _____
 To be paid under the reaffirmation agreement \$ _____
 \$ _____ per month for _____ months (if fixed interest rate)

3. **What is the Annual Percentage Rate (APR) of interest? (See Bankruptcy Code § 524(k)(3)(E).)**
 Before the bankruptcy case was filed _____ %
 Under the reaffirmation agreement _____ % Fixed rate
 Adjustable rate

4. **Does collateral secure the debt?** No
 Yes. Describe the collateral. _____
 Current market value \$ _____

5. **Does the creditor assert that the debt is nondischargeable?** No
 Yes. Attach an explanation of the nature of the debt and the basis for contending that the debt is nondischargeable.

	Income and expenses reported on Schedules I and J	Income and expenses stated on the reaffirmation agreement
6. Using information from Schedule I: Your Income (Official Form 106I) and Schedule J: Your Expenses (Official Form 106J), fill in the amounts.	6a. Combined monthly income from line 12 of Schedule I \$ _____	6e. Monthly income from all sources after payroll deductions \$ _____
	6b. Monthly expenses from line 22c of Schedule J \$ _____	6f. Monthly expenses — \$ _____
	6c. Monthly payments on all reaffirmed debts not listed on Schedule J — \$ _____	6g. Monthly payments on all reaffirmed debts not included in monthly expenses — \$ _____
	6d. Scheduled net monthly income \$ _____ Subtract lines 6b and 6c from 6a. If the total is less than 0, put the number in brackets.	6h. Present net monthly income \$ _____ Subtract lines 6f and 6g from 6e. If the total is less than 0, put the number in brackets.

Debtor 1

First Name Middle Name Last Name

Case number (if known)

7. Are the income amounts on lines 6a and 6e different? No Yes. Explain why they are different and complete line 10. _____

8. Are the expense amounts on lines 6b and 6f different? No Yes. Explain why they are different and complete line 10. _____

9. Is the net monthly income in line 6h less than 0? No Yes. A presumption of hardship arises (unless the creditor is a credit union). Explain how the debtor will make monthly payments on the reaffirmed debt and pay other living expenses. Complete line 10.

10. Debtor's certification about lines 7-9 I certify that each explanation on lines 7-9 is true and correct.

If any answer on lines 7-9 is Yes, the debtor must sign here.

If all the answers on lines 7-9 are No, go to line 11.

_____ _____
Signature of Debtor 1 Signature of Debtor 2 (Spouse Only in a Joint Case)

11. Did an attorney represent the debtor in negotiating the reaffirmation agreement? No Yes. Has the attorney executed a declaration or an affidavit to support the reaffirmation agreement?

No Yes

Part 2: Sign Here

Whoever fills out this form must sign here. I certify that the attached agreement is a true and correct copy of the reaffirmation agreement between the parties identified on this *Cover Sheet for Reaffirmation Agreement*.

_____ Date _____
Signature MM / DD / YYYY

Printed Name

Check one:

Debtor or Debtor's Attorney Creditor or Creditor's Attorney