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**2025 Edition**

# Bankruptcy and the Family

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A Guide to Resources in the Law Library

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References to online legal research databases refer to in-library use of these databases. Remote access is not available.

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# Introduction

## *A Guide to Resources in the Law Library*

- Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005, ([P.L. 109-8](#), 119 Stat. 23) was signed by the President on April 20, 2005 and is effective in cases commenced on or after October 17, 2005.
- **Domestic Support Obligation:** "Section 211 of the Act [P.L. 109-8 (2005)] amends section 101 of the Bankruptcy Code to define a domestic support obligation as a debt that accrues before, on, or after the date of the order for relief and that it includes interest that accrues pursuant to applicable nonbankruptcy law. As defined in the Act, the term includes a debt owed to or recoverable by: (1) a spouse, former spouse, or child of the debtor, or such child's parent, legal guardian, or responsible relative; or (2) a governmental unit. To qualify as a domestic support obligation, the debt must be in the nature of alimony, maintenance, or support (including assistance provided by a governmental unit), without regard to whether such debt is expressly so designated. It must be established or subject to establishment before, on, or after the date of the order of relief pursuant to: (1) a separation agreement, divorce decree, or property settlement agreement; (2) an order of a court of record; or (3) a determination made in accordance with applicable nonbankruptcy law by a governmental unit. It does not apply to a debt assigned to a nongovernmental entity, unless it was assigned voluntarily by the spouse, former spouse, child, or parent solely for the purpose of collecting the debt." [House Report \(Judiciary Committee\) No. 109-31 \(Part 1\), April 8, 2005](#) [To accompany S. 256] pp. 59-60.
- **Nondischargeability of Certain Debts For Alimony, Maintenance, and Support:** "Section 215 of the Act [P.L. 109-8 (2005)] amends Bankruptcy Code section 523(a)(5) to provide that a 'domestic support obligation' (as defined in section 211 of the Act) is nondischargeable and eliminates Bankruptcy Code section 523(a)(18). Section 215(2) amends Bankruptcy Code section 523(c) to delete the reference to section 523(a)(15) in that provision. Section 215(3) amends section 523(a)(15) to provide that obligations to a spouse, former spouse, or a child of the debtor (not otherwise described in section 523(a)(5)) incurred in connection with a divorce or separation or related action are nondischargeable irrespective of the debtor's inability to pay such debts." [House Report \(Judiciary Committee\) No. 109-31 \(Part 1\), April 8, 2005](#) [To accompany S. 256] p. 61.
- "BAPCPA was intended to strengthen the rights of a spouse and children by redefining their support as a 'domestic support obligation' regardless whether 'established or subject to establishment before, on, or after' bankruptcy § 101(14A)(C)." [In re Peterson](#), 410 B.R. 133, 135 (Bkrtcy. D. Conn.) (April 8, 2009).

# Section 1: Domestic Support Obligation

*A Guide to Resources in the Law Library*

**SCOPE:**

- Bibliographic sources relating to the definition of a domestic support obligation under Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005, effective in cases commenced on or after October 17, 2005.

**SEE ALSO:**

- [Section 6: Bankruptcy and Child Support](#) (Child Support Research Guide)

**DEFINITIONS:**

- **Domestic Support Obligation:** "means a debt that accrues before, on, or after the date of the order for relief in a case under this title, including interest that accrues on that debt as provided under applicable nonbankruptcy law notwithstanding any other provision of this title, that is—  
(A) owed to or recoverable by--  
(i) a spouse, former spouse, or child of the debtor or such child's parent, legal guardian, or responsible relative; or  
(ii) a governmental unit;  
(B) in the nature of alimony, maintenance, or support (including assistance provided by a governmental unit) of such spouse, former spouse, or child of the debtor or such child's parent, without regard to whether such debt is expressly so designated;  
(C) established or subject to establishment before, on, or after the date of the order for relief in a case under this title, by reason of applicable provisions of--  
(i) a separation agreement, divorce decree, or property settlement agreement;  
(ii) an order of a court of record; or  
(iii) a determination made in accordance with applicable nonbankruptcy law by a governmental unit; and  
(D) not assigned to a nongovernmental entity, unless that obligation is assigned voluntarily by the spouse, former spouse, child of the debtor, or such child's parent, legal guardian, or responsible relative for the purpose of collecting the debt." [U.S.C. § 101\(14A\)](#)

- [In re Kalsi](#), 637 B.R. 33, 39 (Bankr. S.D.N.Y. 2022) (March 3, 2022). " 'In order to qualify as a domestic support obligation, all four requirements must be satisfied.' *Romano v. Romano (In re Romano)*, 548 B.R. 39, 46 (Bankr. S.D.N.Y. 2016)."

**STATUTES:**

- [Title 11 — Bankruptcy](#) (2025)  
Exceptions to Discharge — [11 U.S.C. § 523\(a\)\(5\)](#)  
Chapter 13 – Discharge - [11 U.S.C. § 1328](#)

You can visit your local law library or search the most recent [statutes](#) and [public acts](#) on the Connecticut General Assembly website.

**COURT RULES:**

- Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure (2024) [Rule 4007](#). Determination of dischargeability of a debt
- United States Bankruptcy Court, District of Connecticut (2024) [Local Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure](#)

**FORMS:**

- *Bankruptcy and Domestic Relations Manual*, by Hon. William Houston Brown, Thomson West, 2024-2025 (also available on Westlaw).
  - Appendix A
    - A:18. Sample Debtor's Certification of Payment of Domestic Support Obligations
    - A:19. Chapter 13 Debtor's Certifications Regarding Domestic Support Obligations and Section 522(q)—Director's Procedural Form B2830

**CASES:**

Once you have identified useful cases, it is important to update them to ensure they are still good law. You can [contact your local law librarian](#) to learn about updating cases.

- [In re Peterson](#), 410 B.R. 133, 135 (Bkrtcy. D. Conn.) (April 8, 2009). "BAPCPA was intended to strengthen the rights of a spouse and children by redefining their support as a 'domestic support obligation' regardless whether 'established or subject to establishment before, on, or *after*' bankruptcy § 101(14A)(C)."
- [In re Kalsi](#), 631 B.R. 369, 372 (Bankr. S.D.N.Y. 2022) (Sept 2, 2021). "Debtor's counsel correctly notes that 'what constitutes alimony, maintenance, or support, will be determined under the bankruptcy laws, not State law.' [Forsdick v. Turgeon](#), 812 F.2d 801, 802 (2d Cir. 1987). However, 'bankruptcy courts may refer to well established state laws in making that determination.' [In re Rogowski](#), 462 B.R. 435, 445 (Bankr. E.D.N.Y. 2011); (noting that 'while the characterization of [an] award by [a state court] referee is not determinative of the question, it is strongly indicative' that an obligation is 'in the nature of alimony, maintenance, or support'). The Second Circuit has explained that reference to state law is certainly appropriate in determining whether an obligation to pay a spouse's attorneys' fees in a divorce proceeding is 'in the nature of alimony, maintenance, or support': As Congress undoubtedly was aware, United States courts have no jurisdiction over divorce or alimony allowances. There is no federal law of domestic relations, the whole subject of which belongs to the laws of the States. Congress could not have intended that federal courts were to formulate the bankruptcy law of alimony and support in a vacuum, precluded from all reference to the reasoning of the well-established law of the States."
- [In re Kalsi](#), 637 B.R. 33 (Bankr. S.D.N.Y. 2022) (March 3, 2022). "The Court concludes that all the awards determined to be Equitable Distribution Awards should be considered as prepetition awards even though the amounts were fixed in the later Matrimonial Order. This result follows from the Divorce Action having been interrupted by—and the awards

Once you have identified useful cases, it is important to update them to ensure they are still good law. You can [contact your local law librarian](#) to learn about updating cases.

were determined during—the Debtor's bankruptcy case.” (p.42)

“The determination of what constitutes a domestic support obligation is to be based on principles of federal law.’ *Id.* (citing *Forsdick v. Turgeon*, 812 F.2d 801, 802 (2d Cir. 1987)). It is true that ‘[w]hat constitutes alimony, maintenance, or support, will be determined under the bankruptcy laws, not State law....’ *Forsdick v. Turgeon*, 812 F.2d at 802 (citing [H.R. Rep. No. 95-595](#), 95th Cong., 1st Sess. 364 (1977)). It is also true that ‘Congress could not have intended that federal courts were to formulate the bankruptcy law of alimony and support in a vacuum, precluded from all reference to the reasoning of the well-established laws of the States.’ *Pauley v. Spong (In re Spong)*, 661 F.2d 6, 9 (2d Cir.1981); see also 4 Collier on Bankruptcy (16<sup>th</sup> ed. 2022) (stating that in determining whether a debt is nondischargeable support bankruptcy courts can look to the intent ‘of the state court in creating the obligation and the purpose of the obligation in light of the parties’ circumstances at that time.’ (p.39)

- [In re Beckford](#), 572 B.R. 61, 70 (Bkrtcy. D. Conn.) (June 23, 2017). “When determining whether an obligation constitutes a domestic support obligation, courts ‘look to the substance, and not merely the form, of the payments.’ *In re Brody*, 3 F.3d 35, 38 (2d Cir.1993). Courts have found that ‘the nature of the debt [is] more important than the identity of the payee.’ *In re Mason*, 545 B.R. 462, 466 (Bankr.S.D.N.Y. 2016)(internal citations omitted). Payments to third parties, under appropriate circumstances, may nevertheless constitute alimony or support. *In re Pierce*, 323 B.R. 21, 28 (Bankr.D.Conn. 2005), see also, *In re Bonito*, No. 09-31888 (LMW), 2010 WL 3398396 (Bankr.D.Conn. 2010) (unpublished) (finding debtor's obligation to make mortgage payment constitutes ‘support’ within the meaning of § 101(14A) and can be enforced by former spouse notwithstanding that the debt is paid to mortgagee).”

#### **ENCYCLOPEDIAS:**

Encyclopedias and ALRs are available in print at some law library locations and accessible online at all law library locations.

Online databases are available for in-library use. Remote access is not available.

- 9D *Am. Jur 2d* Bankruptcy, Thomson West, 2016 (Also available on Westlaw).
  - § 3584. Nondischargeability of debts for domestic support obligations, generally
- 51 *COA 2d* 399, *Cause of action in bankruptcy to determine dischargeability of debt as domestic support obligation under 11 U.S.C.A. § 523(a)(5)*, by David M. Holliday, J.D., Thomson West, 2012 (Also available on Westlaw).
  - I. Introduction
  - II. Substantive Law Overview
    - A. Prima Facie Case
    - B. Defenses
    - C. Parties
    - D. Particular Debts as Domestic Support Obligation

- 1. Debt Held to be Domestic Support Obligation
- 2. Debt Held Not to be Domestic Support Obligation

III. Practice and Procedure

- A. General Procedural Matters
- B. Objections to Dischargeability
- C. Discovery and Other Means of Obtaining Information
- D. Proof
- E. Preclusive Effect of Other Litigation
- F. Remedies or Relief

IV. Practice Checklists

V. Appendix

- 56 ALR Fed 2d 439, *Construction and Application of Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act's (BAPCPA's) Provision Defining "Domestic Support Obligations"* (11 U.S.C.A. §101(14A), by Beth Holliday, J.D., Thomson West, 2011 (Also available on Westlaw)).
- *Collier Family Law and the Bankruptcy Code*, by Henry J. Sommer and Margaret Dee McGarity, Matthew Bender, 2024.
  - Chapter 1. An overview of the bankruptcy process as it affects family law issues
  - Chapter 2. Property interests of the debtor and other family members affected by a bankruptcy case
  - Chapter 3. Liabilities arising in a marriage or family relationship
  - Chapter 4. Special issues involving community property
  - Chapter 5. Jurisdiction of the bankruptcy court in domestic relations matters and applicability of the automatic stay
  - Chapter 6. The dischargeability of marital obligations in bankruptcy
  - Chapter 7. Lien and transfer avoidance in connection with marital or family obligations
  - Chapter 8. Chapter 13 and the divorced or separated debtor
  - Chapter 9. Effects of bankruptcy on nonmarital family relationships
- 1 *Consumer Bankruptcy Law & Practice*, 13<sup>th</sup> ed., by Henry J. Sommer, National Consumer Law Center, 2023.
  - Chapter 12. Issues Arising in Chapter 13 Cases
    - § 12.3.6. Payments to Unsecured Priority Creditors
    - § 12.3.6.3. Postpetition Domestic Support Obligation Payments
  - Chapter 15. The Discharge: Protecting It and Using It
    - § 15.4.3.5. Domestic support obligations—11 U.S.C. § 523(a)(5)
      - § 15.4.3.5.1. Introduction
      - § 15.4.3.5.2. Support debts owed to governmental units

**TEXTS &  
TREATISES:**

Each of our law libraries own the Connecticut treatises cited. You can [contact](#) us or visit our [catalog](#) to determine which of our law libraries own the other treatises cited or to search for more treatises.

References to online databases refer to in-library use of these databases. Remote access is not available.

- § 15.4.3.5.3. Determination of whether debt is a domestic support obligation
- Chapter 17. Chapter 12 Bankruptcy: Family Farmer and Family Fisherman Reorganization
- § 17.5.8. Additional protections for domestic support obligations
- 2 *Collier Bankruptcy Manual*, 4th ed., by Lawrence P. King, editor, Matthew Bender, 2024.
  - Chapter 523. Exceptions to Discharge
    - § 523.08. Discharge Exception for Domestic Support Obligations, Property Settlement Agreements; §523(a)(5)
    - § 523.20. Discharge Exception for Certain Property Settlement and "Hold Harmless" Agreement Debts Incident to Divorce and Separation; § 523(a)(15)
- 4 *Collier on Bankruptcy*, 16<sup>th</sup> ed., by Richard Levin and Henry J. Sommer, eds., Matthew Bender, 2025.
  - Chapter 523. Exceptions to discharge
    - § 523.11. Discharge exception for domestic support obligations, property settlement agreements; § 523(a)(5)
- 8A Connecticut Practice Series, *Family Law and Practice with Forms*, 3d ed., by Arnold H. Rutkin, et al., Thomson West, 2010, with 2022-2023 supplement (also available on Westlaw).
  - Chapter 56. Federal Law Affecting Connecticut Domestic Relations Proceedings
    - § 56.1. The growing federal involvement in family-law policy
    - § 56.4. The impact of federal bankruptcy policy on state divorce practice
    - § 56.5. – State court measures to remedy the effect of bankruptcy

**LAW REVIEWS:**

Public access to law review databases is available on-site at each of our [law libraries](#).

- Lynne F. Riley, *BAPCPA at Ten: Enhanced Domestic Creditor Protections and Enforcement Rights*, 90 *American Bankruptcy Law Journal* 267 (2016).
- Edward W. Vopat, *Domestic Support Obligations Under the Revised Bankruptcy Code*, 17 *Norton Journal of Bankruptcy Law and Practice* (June 2008).
- David C. Hoskins and Ellen R. Welner, *Bankruptcy and Divorce: What Divorce Counsel Should Know About Bankruptcy*, 37 *The Colorado Lawyer* 35 (October 2008).
- Nathalie Martin, *Winners And Losers In Bankruptcy Reform: Do Women Or Children Really Come Out On Top?* 41 *Family Law Quarterly* 219 (Summer 2007).
- Janet Leach Richards, *A Guide To Spousal And Property Division Claims Under The Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention And Consumer Protection Act Of 2005*, 41 *Family Law Quarterly*

227 (Summer 2007).

- James L. Musselman, *Once Upon A Time In Bankruptcy Court: Sorting Out Liability Of Marital Property For Marital Debt Is No Fairy Tale*, 41 Family Law Quarterly 249 (Summer 2007).
- Michael Satz and Elizabeth Barker Brandt, *Representing Victims Of Domestic Violence In Property Distribution After The Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention And Consumer Protection Act Of 2005*, 41 Family Law Quarterly 275 (Summer 2007).
- Michaela M. White and James P. Caher, *The Dog That Didn't Bark: Domestic Support Obligations and Exempt Property After BAPCPA*, 41 Family Law Quarterly 299 (Summer 2007).
- Philip L. Strauss and Karen Cordry, *Domestic Support Issues From A Governmental Perspective*, 41 Family Law Quarterly 321 (Summer 2007).
- Claude R. Bowles, *Expecting The Unexpected: Unusual Domestic Relations Law Issues That May Arise Under BAPCPA*, 41 Family Law Quarterly 343 (Summer 2007).
- Barbara H. Katz, *So You Think You Still Want to Practice Consumer Bankruptcy Law?* 16 Connecticut Lawyer No. 3, pg. 18 (2005).
- Lynne F. Riley and Maria C. Furlong, *The Complex Intersection of Divorce and Bankruptcy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Norton Journal of Bankruptcy Law and Practice (April 2007).
- Amanda Nowak, *Where's My Refund? How to Address Overpaid Domestic Support Obligations Under the Bankruptcy Code*, 36 Emory Bankruptcy Developments Journal, (2020).

# Section 2: Nondischargeability of Domestic Support Orders

*A Guide to Resources in the Law Library*

**SCOPE:** Bibliographic sources relating to the dischargeability of a domestic support obligation under Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005, effective in cases commenced on or after October 17, 2005.

**SEE ALSO:**

- [Section 6: Bankruptcy and Child Support](#) (Child Support Research Guide)

**DEFINITIONS:**

- **Nondischargeable:** "A discharge under section 727, 1141, 1192, t 1228(a), 1228(b), or 1328(b) of this title does not discharge an individual from any debt . . . .  
(5) for a domestic support obligation ....  
(15) to a spouse, former spouse, or child of the debtor and not of the kind described in paragraph (5) [above] that is incurred by the debtor in the course of a divorce or separation or in connection with a separation agreement, divorce decree or other order of a court of record, or a determination made in accordance with State or territorial law by governmental unit . . . ." [11 U.S.C. § 523\(a\)](#) (2023)

**STATUTES:**

- [Title 11 — Bankruptcy](#) (2025)  
Exceptions to Discharge — [11 U.S.C. § 523\(a\)\(5\)](#); [11 U.S.C. § 523\(a\)\(15\)](#)  
Chapter 13 – Discharge - [11 U.S.C. § 1328](#)

**LEGISLATIVE:**

- Sec. 215. **Nondischargeability of Certain Debts for Alimony, Maintenance, and Support.** "Section 215 of the Act amends Bankruptcy Code section 523(a)(5) to provide that a 'domestic support obligation' (as defined in section 211 of the Act) is nondischargeable and eliminates Bankruptcy Code section 523(a)(18). Section 215(2) amends Bankruptcy Code section 523(c) to delete the reference to section 523(a)(15) in that provision. Section 215(3) amends section 523(a)(15) to provide that obligations to a spouse, former spouse, or a child of the debtor (not otherwise described in section 523(a)(5)) incurred in connection with a divorce or separation or related action are nondischargeable irrespective of the debtor's inability to pay such debts." [House Report \(Judiciary Committee\) No. 109-31 \(Part 1\), April 8, 2005](#) [To accompany S. 256] p. 61.

**FORMS:**

- *Bankruptcy and Domestic Relations Manual*, by Hon. William Houston Brown, Thomson West, 2024-2025 (also available on Westlaw).

## Appendix A

- A:2 Sample Motion to Determine A Contested Matter—  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9013
- A:4 Sample Objection to Claim
- A:7 Sample Section 727(a) Complaint Objecting to  
Discharge
- A:8 Sample Complaint For Section 523(a)(5)  
Exception From Discharge
- A:9 Sample Answer to Section 523(a)(5) and  
532(a)(15) Complaint
- A:10 Sample Complaint for Section 523(a)(15)  
Exception From Discharge
- A:11 Sample Answer to Complaint for Section  
523(a)(15) Exception from Discharge
- A:12 Sample Complaint For Section 523(a)(5)  
Determination of Dischargeability by Debtor
- A:13 Sample Answer to Debtor's Complaint to  
Determine Dischargeability of § 523(a)(5) Debt

- *Collier Family Law and the Bankruptcy Code*, by Henry J. Sommer and Margaret Dee McGarity, Matthew Bender, 2024.
  - Chapter 6. The Dischargeability of Marital Obligations in Bankruptcy
    - § 6.50. Checklist: Planning and Practice Strategies
    - § 6.51. Form: Complaint Seeking Determination That Debt Is Nondischargeable Because It Is for Alimony or Support or, in the Alternative, Because It Is a Nondischargeable Property Settlement
    - § 6.52. Form: Complaint Seeking Determination That Debt Is a Dischargeable Property Settlement Debt.
    - § 6.53. Form: Sample Marital Settlement Agreement Clauses to Clarify Intent to Create Obligations for Alimony, Maintenance, Support or Property Settlement Obligations and Provide Security

### **CASES:**

Once you have identified useful cases, it is important to update the cases before you rely on them. Updating case law means checking to see if the cases are still good law. You can [contact your local law librarian](#) to learn about the tools available to you to update cases.

- [In re Kalsi](#), 637 B.R. 33, 35 (Bankr. S.D.N.Y. 2022) (March 3, 2022). "The Court finds and concludes that these Equitable Distribution Awards are excepted from discharge under section 523(a)(15) of the Bankruptcy Code. See [In re Golio](#), 393 B.R. at 61 (noting that awards for equitable distribution are excepted to discharge under section 523(a)(15)); see also *In re St. Clair*, 2011 WL 6888369, at (stating that 'an equitable distribution obligation is excepted from discharge under' section 523(a)(15)). First, the Equitable Distribution Awards are debts owed to a former spouse—Ms. Purewal. 11 U.S.C. § 523(a)(15). Second, they are not a 'domestic support obligation' as described in section 523(a)(5) and defined in section 101(14A) because they are not in the nature of maintenance, alimony, or support *Id.* §§ 523(a)(5), (15), 101(14A). And third, they were debts incurred in a divorce decree by the State Court—an order of a court of record. *Id.* § 523(a)(15). Therefore, the Equitable Distribution Awards are excepted from discharge under section 523(a)(15) of the Bankruptcy Code....Claims that are filed after the chapter 11 petition

Once you have identified useful cases, it is important to update the cases before you rely on them. Updating case law means checking to see if the cases are still good law. You can [contact your local law librarian](#) to learn about the tools available to you to update cases.

date but before a debtor's conversion to chapter 7 are to be treated as prepetition claims." (p. 35)

"Section 523(a)(15) encompasses a broader category of debt than a domestic support obligation under section 523(a)(5).' [\*In re Mason\*](#), 545 B.R. 462, 466 (Bankr. S.D.N.Y. 2016). There are three elements to find a claim is excepted from discharge under section 523(a)(15): (1) The debt in question is to a spouse, former spouse or child of the debtor; (2) The debt is not a support obligation of the type described in section 523(a)(5); and (3) The obligation was incurred in a separation agreement, divorce decree or other order of a court of record. 4 Collier on Bankruptcy ¶ 523.23 (16th ed. 2021); 11 U.S.C. § 523(a)(15)." (pp. 39-40)

"Indeed, courts have noted that awards to a spouse or former spouse for equitable distribution are excepted from discharge under section 523(a)(15).  [\*Gilman v. Golio \(In re Golio\)\*](#), 393 B.R. 56, 61 (Bankr. E.D.N.Y. 2008) ('With respect to non-domestic support obligations, such as awards relating to equitable distribution, 11 U.S.C. § 523(a) (15) now provides that a discharge under the Bankruptcy Code does not discharge an individual debtor from any [such] debt ....'); see also  [\*In re St. Clair\*](#), No. 08-27884, 2011 WL 6888369, at (Bankr. D.N.J. Dec. 29, 2011) ('In a chapter 7 proceeding, an equitable distribution obligation is excepted from discharge under 11 U.S.C. § 523(a) (15).')." (p. 40)

- [\*Utz v. Utz\*](#), Superior Court, Judicial District of New London, Regional Family Trial Docket at Middletown, KNOFA054102960 (April 15, 2014) (2014 Conn. Super. Lexis 867) (2014 WL 2022242) Footnote 5 - "A more forceful explanation of the interplay between the state court and the bankruptcy court in family matters is expressed in the decision of  [\*In re Edwards\*](#), 172 B.R. 505 (Bankr.D.Conn. 1994), by the Honorable Alan H.W. Shiff when he wrote: '[a]n inquiry of the sort urged by the husband would put federal courts in the position of modifying the matrimonial decrees of state courts, thus interfering with the delicate state systems for dealing with the dissolution of marriages and the difficult and complex results that flow therefrom. State-crafted family law mechanisms should not be disturbed by federal court intervention unless there is an unmistakable mandate from congress to do so in order to achieve a valid federal objective.'

'We find no such mandate here. To the contrary, congress has clearly required the bankruptcy court to protect the rights of a former spouse receiving alimony at the expense of the debtor seeking a fresh start. The husband's argument would turn this legislative intent on its head . . ." (Internal quotation marks omitted.)  [\*In re Edwards\*](#), supra, 511. It is notable that Judge Shiff's analysis predates the most recent amendments to the Bankruptcy Code that further strengthen the public policy protecting alimony and other support type orders from being discharged in a bankruptcy filing."

Once you have identified useful cases, it is important to update the cases before you rely on them. Updating case law means checking to see if the cases are still good law. You can [contact your local law librarian](#) to learn about the tools available to you to update cases.

- [In re Vann](#), 13-51364, (Bankr. D. Conn.) (Feb. 6, 2014) (2014 WL 505257). "However, under BAPCPA, all debts owed to a spouse, former spouse, or child of a debtor are *nondischargeable if incurred in the course of a divorce proceeding, notwithstanding the debtor's ability to pay the debt or the relative benefits and detriments to the parties.*"
- [In re Barbuito](#), 10-21676 ASD (Bankr. D. Conn.) (Aug. 6, 2012) (2012 WL 3229060). "The material facts do not, however, so clearly establish that the debts are or are not 'domestic support obligations' within the meaning of §§ 523(a)(5) and 101(14A). However, if the debts are not 'domestic support obligations,' then the debts are non-dischargeable under § 523(a)(15). If they are 'domestic support obligations' then they are non-dischargeable under § 523(a)(5). Therefore, it is not necessary for the Court in the context of this Chapter 7 case to determine whether they are non-dischargeable under §§ 523(a)(5) or 523(a)(15). See, [Tarone v. Tarone](#), 434 B.R. 41, 49 (Bankr.E.D.N.Y.2010), ('[I]t is irrelevant whether those awards constitute true support obligations, because even if not encompassed within § 523(a)(5), they are nondischargeable pursuant to § 523(a)(15)'); [Gilman v. Golia](#), 393 B.R. 56, 62 (Bankr.E.D.N.Y.2008) and [Monastra v. Monastra](#) (In re Monastra), Adv. No. 10-090, 2010 Bank. LEXIS 3616, 2010 WL 3937354 (Bankr.E.D.Pa., October 6, 2010)."
- [In re Rubenstein](#), 09-22124 ASD (Bankr. D. Conn.) (Mar. 9, 2012) (2012 WL 837339). "The Debtor's position is that the 'faulty reasoning,' Def.'s Mem., ECF No. 88 at 6, of the Second Circuit in *Spong* and its progeny have been somehow superseded by BAPCPA; she argues that the Plaintiff is not the child's 'legal guardian,' and that the **GAL Fee** is not recoverable from the child under applicable nonbankruptcy law. Such arguments are unavailing. Rather than reducing the scope of the § 523(a)(5) exception to discharge, BAPCPA expanded it to encompass family situations that did not fit neatly into the earlier language; none of the terms at issue in *Spong*, *Peters*, or *Maddigan* were eliminated under BAPCPA and nothing in either the language or the legislative history of BAPCPA indicates any intent to displace the long-established case law.

This Court joins other bankruptcy courts in this Circuit in concluding that *Spong* and its progeny remain just as applicable after BAPCPA as they were before it. See, e.g. [In re Rogowski](#), 462 B.R. 435 (Bankr.E.D.N.Y.2011); [In re Tarone](#), 434 B.R. 41 (Bankr.E.D.N.Y.2010); [In re Golia](#), 393 B.R. 56 (Bankr.E.D.N.Y.2008); [In re Schenkein](#), 2010 WL 3219464 (Bankr.S.D.N.Y.2010)." [Emphasis added.]

- [Musolino v. Musolino](#), 121 Conn. App. 469, 472, 997 A.2d 599 (2010). "The court expounded on that finding in its April 8, 2009 memorandum of decision. It stated in relevant part: 'The court . . . finds that the defendant's share of the balance on the Visa credit card is a domestic support order

and, therefore, is not dischargeable in bankruptcy. . . .Under 11 U.S.C. § 523 (a) (5), a debtor may not discharge a debt to a former spouse that is for a domestic support obligation. . . . After an application of the five factors from *Lewis v. Lewis*, [35 Conn. App. 622, 627-28, 646 A.2d 273 (1994)], that are used to distinguish a domestic support obligation from a property settlement in the dissolution action and a careful review of the evidence and facts, this court concludes that the defendant's obligation to pay the Visa credit card bill is a domestic support obligation. As a result, [that] debt is not dischargeable and the defendant must pay his share of that debt."

- *Boyne v. Boyne*, 112 Conn. App. 279, 289, 962 A. 2d 818 (2009). "The defendant next claims that the court improperly declared that all of its financial orders were in the nature of support and, therefore, not dischargeable in bankruptcy. Although the court does not have the authority to determine the nature of a debt in contravention of a determination by the federal Bankruptcy Court, it was well within its discretion to indicate in its judgment that it was intending all of the orders to be in the nature of support as guidance to the Bankruptcy Court because '[t]he main principle guiding bankruptcy courts in determining whether a debt is nondischargeable alimony, maintenance or support is the intent of the parties or the state court in creating the obligation and the purpose of the obligation in light of the parties' circumstances at the time.' 4 W. Collier, *Bankruptcy* (15th Ed. Rev. 2003) § 523.11[6]. Accordingly, although the ultimate question of dischargeability rests with the Bankruptcy Court, it was not improper for the trial court to posit that all of its financial orders were in the nature of support."

#### **TEXTS & TREATISES:**

Each of our law libraries own the Connecticut treatises cited. You can [contact](#) us or visit our [catalog](#) to determine which of our law libraries own the other treatises cited or to search for more treatises.

References to online databases refer to in-library use of these databases. Remote access is not available.

- *Collier Family Law and the Bankruptcy Code*, by Henry J. Sommer and Margaret Dee McGarity, Matthew Bender, 2024.  
Chapter 6. The Dischargeability of Marital Obligations in Bankruptcy
  - § 6.01. Introduction
  - § 6.02. The Bankruptcy Discharge
  - § 6.03. The Exception to Discharge for Domestic Support Obligations; General Principles
  - § 6.04. Factors Considered in Distinguishing Alimony, Maintenance and Support Claims from Property Settlement Claims
  - § 6.05. Particular Types of Obligations
  - § 6.06. Effect of Assignment of Support Obligations
  - § 6.07. Procedure for Determining Dischargeability of Domestic Support Obligations
  - § 6.07A. The Exception to Discharge for Other Obligations Incurred in Connection with Divorce or Separation
  - § 6.08. Applicability of Other Exceptions to Discharge in Family Law Cases
  - § 6.09. Objections to Discharge

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References to online databases refer to in-library use of these databases. Remote access is not available.

## § 6.10. Modification of Support Obligations After a Bankruptcy Case

- *Bankruptcy Practice for the General Practitioner*, 2024 ed., by Hon. W. Homer Drake, Jr. and Karen D. Visser, Thomson West (also available on Westlaw).
  - § 6.17. Dischargeability – Domestic support obligations and non-support divorce-related debts
- 1 *Consumer Bankruptcy Law & Practice*, 13<sup>th</sup> ed., by Henry J. Sommer, National Consumer Law Center, 2023.
  - Chapter 15. The Discharge: Protecting It and Using It
    - § 15.4. Exceptions to discharge
      - § 15.4.1. Differences between Chapter 7 and Chapter 13
      - § 15.4.2. How exceptions to discharge are raised
- 2 *Collier Bankruptcy Manual*, 4th ed., by Lawrence P. King, editor, Matthew Bender, 2024.
  - Chapter 523. Exceptions to Discharge
    - § 523.08. Discharge Exception for Domestic Support Obligations, Property Settlement Agreements; 523(a)(5)
    - § 523.20. Discharge Exception for Certain Property Settlement and "Hold Harmless" Agreement Debts Incident to Divorce and Separation; § 523(a)(15)
- 4 *Collier on Bankruptcy*, 16<sup>th</sup> ed., by Richard Levin and Henry J. Sommer, eds., Matthew Bender, 2025.
  - Chapter 523. Exceptions to discharge
    - § 523.11. Discharge exception for domestic support obligations, property settlement agreements; § 523(a)(5)
- 2 *Lindley and Parley on Separation Agreements and Antenuptial Contracts*, 2nd ed., by Alexander Lindley, et al., Matthew Bender, 2025 (also available on Lexis).
  - Chapter 41. Bankruptcy
    - Part C. The Law
      - § 41.40. Introduction
      - § 41.41. Nondischargeable Debt
      - § 41.42. Spousal Support
      - § 41.43. Child Support
- 4 *Family Law and Practice*, by Arnold H. Rutkin, Matthew Bender, 2024 (also available on Lexis).
  - Chapter 44. The Effect of Bankruptcy Laws on Marital Dissolutions, Agreements and Property
    - § 44.05. Discharge and Dischargeability Issues – In General
    - § 44.06. Determining the Dischargeability of Obligations for Alimony, Support and Maintenance

- 1 *Valuation and Distribution of Marital Property*, by John P. McCahey, ed., Matthew Bender, 2024 (also available on Lexis).
  - Chapter 13. Creditors' Rights in the Distribution of Marital Property
    - A. Effect of Bankruptcy Rights in Marital Property
    - §13.05 Distribution of Marital Property in Bankruptcy
    - [1] Inclusion of marital property as "property of the estate"
    - [2] Application of the automatic stay to marital property
    - [3] Support obligations versus property settlements
      - [c] Determining dischargeability
      - [d] Dischargeability of selected marital obligations
    - [4] Non-Support Obligations incurred in connection with divorce
      - [b] Scope of exception to discharge

**ENCYCLOPEDIAS:**

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Online databases are available for in-library use. Remote access is not available.

- 9D *Am. Jur 2d Bankruptcy* Thomson West, 2016 (Also available on Westlaw).
  - § 3584. Nondischargeability of debts for domestic support obligations, generally
- 8B *CJS Bankruptcy* Thomson West, 2016 (Also available on Westlaw).
  - D. Debts and Liabilities Discharged
    - 2. Exceptions to Discharge
      - § 1089. - Domestic support obligations and other debts to spouses and children
      - § 1090. - Factors considered in determining nature of award
      - § 1091. - Child support

**LAW REVIEWS:**

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- Peter C. Alexander, *Bankruptcy, Divorce, and the Rooker-Feldman Doctrine: A Potential Marriage of Convenience*, 13 *Journal of Law and Family Studies* 81 (2011).
- Edward W. Vopat, *Domestic Support Obligations Under the Revised Bankruptcy Code*, 17 *Norton Journal of Bankruptcy Law and Practice* (June 2008).
- David C. Hoskins and Ellen R. Welner, *Bankruptcy and Divorce: What Divorce Counsel Should Know About Bankruptcy*, 37 *The Colorado Lawyer* 35 (October 2008).
- Barbara H. Katz, *So You Think You Still Want to Practice Consumer Bankruptcy Law?* 16 *Connecticut Lawyer* No. 3, pg. 18 (2005).

# Section 3: Priority of Claims for Domestic Support Orders

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*A Guide to Resources in the Law Library*

**SCOPE:** Bibliographic sources relating to the priority of claims for a domestic support obligation under Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act 2005, effective in cases commenced on or after October 17, 2005.

**DEFINITIONS:**

- **Priorities for Claims for Domestic Support Obligations:**  
"(a) The following expenses and claims have priority in the following order:
  - (1) First:
    - (A) Allowed unsecured claims for domestic support obligations that, as of the date of the filing of the petition in a case under this title, are owed to or recoverable by a spouse, former spouse, or child of the debtor, or such child's parent, legal guardian, or responsible relative, without regard to whether the claim is filed by such person or is filed by a governmental unit on behalf of such person, on the condition that funds received under this paragraph by a governmental unit under this title after the date of the filing of the petition shall be applied and distributed in accordance with applicable nonbankruptcy law.
    - (B) Subject to claims under subparagraph (A), allowed unsecured claims for domestic support obligations that, as of the date of the filing of the petition, are assigned by a spouse, former spouse, child of the debtor, or such child's parent, legal guardian, or responsible relative to a governmental unit (unless such obligation is assigned voluntarily by the spouse, former spouse, child, parent, legal guardian, or responsible relative of the child for the purpose of collecting the debt) or are owed directly to or recoverable by a governmental unit under applicable nonbankruptcy law, on the condition that funds received under this paragraph by a governmental unit under this title after the date of the filing of the petition be applied and distributed in accordance with applicable nonbankruptcy law.
    - (C) If a trustee is appointed or elected under section 701, 702, 703, 1104, 1202, or 1302, the administrative expenses of the trustee allowed under paragraphs (1)(A), (2), and (6) of section 503(b) shall be paid before payment of claims under subparagraphs (A) and (B), to the extent that the trustee administers assets that are otherwise available for the payment of such claims." [11 U.S.C. § 507\(a\)\(1\) \(2023\)](#)

**STATUTES:**

You can visit your local law library or [search the most recent U.S. Code](#) on the U.S. Code website.

- [Title 11 — Bankruptcy](#) (2025)  
Priorities — [11 U.S.C. § 507\(a\)\(1\)](#)

**CASES:**

Once you have identified useful cases, it is important to update the cases before you rely on them. Updating case law means checking to see if the cases are still good law. You can [contact your local law librarian](#) to learn about the tools available to you to update cases.

- [In re Kalsi](#), 637 B.R. 33 (Bankr. S.D.N.Y. 2022) (March 3, 2022). "Matrimonial awards that are determined to be 'equitable distribution' are unsecured claims that are not entitled to a priority under section 507(a) (1)(A), but they are non-dischargeable under Bankruptcy Code section 523(a)(15)." (p. 37)

"The priority status of 'domestic support obligations' is clearly established in the Bankruptcy Code. 'Domestic support obligations' are granted a first priority under section 507(a)(1). 11 U.S.C. § 507(a)(1). 'To qualify for the higher priority in section 507(a) (1)(A), the claim must, as of the petition date, be owed to a spouse, former spouse or child of the debtor, or such child's parent, legal guardian or responsible relative.' 4 Collier on Bankruptcy ¶ 507.03[1] (16th ed. 2021). In *In re Kalsi*, I noted that 'any distribution from the estate' for claims held by Ms. Purewal '(and any other holders of claims that are prepetition domestic support obligations) under section 507(a)(1)(A) would be paid first (after any administrative expense recovery by the chapter 7 trustee under section 507(a)(1)(C)).' 631 B.R. at 374. To the extent that awards determined to be 'domestic support obligations' are not paid in full from distributions made by the debtor's estate, they are excepted from discharge under section 523(a)(5)." (p. 38)
- [In re Skipp](#), 557 B.R. 271, 277 (D. Conn. 2016). "Because I find that collateral estoppel does not apply, this case is remanded for independent consideration of whether Ms. Skipp's debt to Ms. Brigham for **GAL fees** is non-dischargeable as a domestic support obligation under 11 U.S.C. §§ 523(a), 101(14A). Whether the payment is dischargeable as a domestic support obligation is a question of fact for the Bankruptcy Court. See [In re Maddigan](#), 312 F.3d 589, 595 (2d Cir.2002) ('the question whether a debt meets the statutory requirement for being in the nature of support is a factual determination of the bankruptcy court'). See also [Bieluch v. Cook](#), 216 F.3d 1071, 2000 WL 898899, at \*2 (2d Cir. July 05, 2000) (unpublished summ. order) (2d Cir. 2000) (noting that 'an obligation's status as... support exempted from discharge... is a question of federal bankruptcy law' and 'a bankruptcy court must make its own factual findings regarding the nature of a debt to a former spouse, but in doing so may consider the state court's characterization of the payment' in the earlier divorce proceedings)."
- [Peterson v. Peterson](#), Superior Court, Judicial District of Stamford – Norwalk, No. FSTFA094015636S (Nov. 7, 2011)

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(2011 WL 5925132). "In this contested matrimonial matter both parties have filed bankruptcy petitions. The plaintiff, wife, may have received a discharge in bankruptcy. The defendant's, husband, Chapter 11 bankruptcy petition is still pending....There are no intervention documents, pleadings or motions on behalf of the Trustee in Bankruptcy for the Estate of Todd Peterson in the court file.

Rightly so a Trustee in Bankruptcy has concerns over protecting the assets of the bankruptcy estate including state trial court orders that may interfere with the management of the bankruptcy estate or disclose other assets previously unknown to the Trustee in bankruptcy.

A state court has jurisdiction to hear matters pertaining to the dissolution of marriage but not to enter orders relating to property that is part of a bankruptcy estate. 11 U.S.C. § 362(a)(1),(2) and (3). The filing of a bankruptcy petition does not operate as a stay of paternity actions, establishing, modifying, and enforcing domestic support orders, child custody, child visitation and domestic violence. 11 U.S.C. § 362(b)(2)(A)(i)(ii)(iii) and (v). 'The filing of a petition ... does not operate as a stay ... for the dissolution of a marriage, except that to the extent that such proceeding seeks to determine the division of property that is property of the estate.' 11 U.S.C. § 362(b)(2)(A)(iv)."

- In re Bonito, No. 09-31888 (LMW), 2010 WL 3398396, (Bankr. D. Conn.) (Aug. 26, 2010). "The court further concludes and/or finds that the Debtor's obligations in respect of the Mortgage Payments otherwise constitutes 'support' within the purview of Section 101(14A)(B) for the reasons that follow. First, with one possible exception not relevant here, the state court had no authority to make pendente lite awards other than with respect to support pursuant to Section 46b-83. (See *id.*) Second, in making a Section 46b-83 award, the state court was required to consider factors materially similar to the factors generally considered by the bankruptcy court in making its own determinations as to whether a debt is in the nature of support. Compare Conn. Gen.Stat. § 46b-82(a) with Nero, *supra*. Finally, because Mrs. Bonito does not own the Property and is not liable on the Mortgage debt, the only purpose for the provision in the Order requiring the Debtor to make the Mortgage Payments can be to support Mrs. Bonito (and the children) by maintaining the Property as a place for them to live.

For all of the reasons set forth above, the court finds and/or concludes that the Debtor's obligation in respect of the Mortgage Payments is a 'domestic support obligation' within the purview of Section 101(14A)."

- Kinsella v. Kinsella, Superior Court, Judicial District of Fairfield at Bridgeport, No. FA020398654S (July 25, 2006) (2006 WL 2348955). "Courts have a list of factors to

examine in determining whether a particular transaction constitutes a non-dischargeable duty such as alimony, maintenance or support, or whether it is a property settlement and, therefore, dischargeable. The following factors are taken into account: (1) whether the obligation terminates on the death or remarriage of the debtor's spouse; (2) whether the payments appear to balance disparate income; (3) whether the payments are made to a third party or the ex-spouse; (4) whether the obligation terminates at the end of a specified event (i.e., children are out of school, debt is satisfied, etc.); and (5) What was the intent of the parties. *Id.* at 516-17; see *Feyer v. Feyer*, 71 B.R. 912, 918 (Bkrtcy.S.D.N.Y.1987).

After consideration of the above factor, the Court concludes that the defendant's assumption of this debt constitutes support of the plaintiff. Although the obligation is owed to a third party and will terminate upon payment, the Court finds that it was the intent of the parties to have the husband assume the marital debt in lieu of alimony payments. Therefore, the debts listed in article 8.4 of the separation agreement were not dischargeable in bankruptcy."

## **TEXTS & TREATISES:**

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References to online databases refer to in-library use of these databases. Remote access is not available.

- 1 *Consumer Bankruptcy Law & Practice*, 13<sup>th</sup> ed., by Henry J. Sommer, National Consumer Law Center, 2023.
  - Chapter 12. Issues Arising in Chapter 13 Cases
    - § 12.3.6. Payments to Unsecured Priority Creditors
    - § 12.3.6.3. Postpetition Domestic Support Obligation Payments
  - Chapter 17. Chapter 12 Bankruptcy: Family Farmer and Family Fisherman Reorganization
    - § 17.5.8. Additional Protections for Domestic Support Obligations
- 4 *Collier on Bankruptcy*, 16<sup>th</sup> ed., by Richard Levin and Henry J. Sommer, eds., Matthew Bender, 2025.
  - Chapter 507. Priorities
    - § 507.01. Overview of section 507
    - § 507.02. Function and purpose of priorities
      - [1]—Purpose of priorities
      - [a]—Purpose of first priority
    - § 507.03. First priority: Domestic support obligations
    - § 507(a)(1)

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- 9D *Am. Jur 2d* Bankruptcy Thomson West, 2016 (Also available on Westlaw).  
    § 3584. Nondischargeability of debts for domestic support obligations, generally
- 8B *CJS* Bankruptcy Thomson West, 2016 (Also available on Westlaw).  
    D. Debts and Liabilities Discharged  
        2. Exceptions to Discharge  
            § 1089. Domestic support obligations and other debts to spouses and children  
            § 1090. – Factors considered in determining nature of award  
            § 1091. – Child support

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- Edward W. Vopat, *Domestic Support Obligations Under the Revised Bankruptcy Code*, 17 *Norton Journal of Bankruptcy Law and Practice* (June 2008).
- David C. Hoskins and Ellen R. Welner, *Bankruptcy and Divorce: What Divorce Counsel Should Know About Bankruptcy*, 37 *The Colorado Lawyer* 35 (October 2008).
- Barbara H. Katz, *So You Think You Still Want to Practice Consumer Bankruptcy Law?* 16 *Connecticut Lawyer* No. 3, pg. 18 (2005).

Table 1: Domestic Support Order and Bankruptcy

Excerpts from [House Report \(Judiciary Committee\) No. 109-31 \(Part 1\), April 8, 2005](#) [To accompany S. 256] [Pages 59-62]

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and defenses that are related to such assets to the same extent as that person would be subject to if the sale was not conducted under section 363.

*Sec. 205. GAO Study and Report on Reaffirmation Agreement Process.* Section 205 of the Act directs the Comptroller General of the United States to report to Congress on how consumers are treated in connection with the reaffirmation agreement process. This report must include: (1) the policies and activities of creditors with respect to reaffirmation agreements; and (2) whether such consumers are fully, fairly, and consistently informed of their rights under the Bankruptcy Code. The report, which must be completed not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, may include recommendations for legislation to address any abusive or coercive tactics found in connection with the reaffirmation process.

### **Subtitle B. Priority Child Support**

*Sec. 211. Definition of Domestic Support Obligation.* Section 211 of the Act amends section 101 of the Bankruptcy Code to define a domestic support obligation as a debt that accrues before, on, or after the date of the order for relief and that it includes interest that accrues pursuant to applicable nonbankruptcy law. As defined in the Act, the term includes a debt owed to or recoverable by: (1) a spouse, former spouse, or child of the debtor, or such child's parent, legal guardian, or responsible relative; or (2) a governmental unit. To qualify as a domestic support obligation, the debt must be in the nature of alimony, maintenance, or support (including assistance provided by a governmental unit), without regard to whether such debt is expressly so designated. It must be established or subject to establishment before, on, or after the date of the order of relief pursuant to: (1) a separation agreement, divorce decree, or property settlement agreement; (2) an order of a court of record; or (3) a determination made in accordance with applicable nonbankruptcy law by a governmental unit. It does not apply to a debt assigned to a nongovernmental entity, unless it was assigned voluntarily by the spouse, former spouse, child, or parent solely for the purpose of collecting the debt.

*Sec. 212. Priorities for Claims for Domestic Support Obligations.* Section 212 of the Act amends section 507(a) of the Bankruptcy Code to accord first priority in payment to allowed unsecured claims for domestic support obligations that, as of the petition date, are owed to or recoverable by a spouse, former spouse, or child of the debtor, or the parent, legal guardian, or responsible relative of such child, without regard to whether such claim is filed by the claimant or by a governmental unit on behalf of such claimant, on the condition that funds received by such unit under this provision be applied and distributed in accordance with nonbankruptcy law. Subject to these claims, section 212 accords the same payment priority to allowed unsecured claims for domestic support obligations that, as of the petition date, were assigned by a spouse, former spouse, child of the debtor, or such child's parent, legal guardian, or responsible relative to a governmental unit (unless the claimant assigned the claim voluntarily for the purpose of collecting the debt), or are owed directly to or recoverable by a governmental unit under applicable nonbankruptcy law, on the condition that funds

received by such unit under this provision be applied and distributed in accordance with nonbankruptcy law. Where a trustee administers assets that may be available for payment of domestic support obligations under section 507(a)(1) (as amended), administrative expenses of the trustee allowed under section 503(b)(1)(A), (2) and (6) of the Bankruptcy Code must be paid before such claims to the extent the trustee administers assets that are otherwise available for the payment of these claims.

*Sec. 213. Requirements To Obtain Confirmation and Discharge in Cases Involving Domestic Support Obligations.* With respect to chapter 11 cases, section 213(1) adds a condition for confirmation of a plan. It amends section 1129(a) of the Bankruptcy Code to provide that if a chapter 11 debtor is required by judicial or administrative order or statute to pay a domestic support obligation, then the debtor must pay all amounts payable under such order or statute that became payable postpetition as a prerequisite for confirmation.

With respect to chapter 12 cases, section 213(2) of the Act amends section 1208(c) of the Bankruptcy Code to provide that the failure of a debtor to pay any domestic support obligation that first becomes payable postpetition is cause for conversion or dismissal of the case. Section 213(3) amends Bankruptcy Code section 1222(a) to permit a chapter 12 debtor to propose a plan paying less than full payment of all amounts owed for a claim entitled to priority under Bankruptcy Code section 507(a)(1)(B) if all of the debtor's projected disposable income for a five-year period is applied to make payments under the plan. Section 213(4) of the Act amends Bankruptcy Code section 1222(b) to permit a chapter 12 debtor to propose a plan that pays postpetition interest on claims that are nondischargeable under Section 1228(a), but only to the extent that the debtor has disposable income available to pay such interest after payment of all allowed claims in full. Section 213(5) amends Bankruptcy Code section 1225(a) to provide that if a chapter 12 debtor is required by judicial or administrative order or statute to pay a domestic support obligation, then the debtor must pay such obligations pursuant to such order or statute that became payable postpetition as a condition of confirmation. Section 213(6) amends Bankruptcy Code section 1228(a) to condition the granting of a chapter 12 discharge upon the debtor's payment of certain postpetition domestic support obligations.

With respect to chapter 13 cases, section 213(7) of the Act amends Bankruptcy Code section 1307(c) to provide that the failure of a debtor to pay any domestic support obligation that first becomes payable postpetition is cause for conversion or dismissal of the debtor's case. Section 213(8) amends Bankruptcy Code section 1322(a) to permit a chapter 13 debtor to propose a plan paying less than the full amount of a claim entitled to priority under Bankruptcy Code section 507(a)(1)(B) if the plan provides that all of the debtor's projected disposable income over a five-year period will be applied to make payments under the plan. Section 213(9) amends Bankruptcy Code section 1322(b) to permit a chapter 13 debtor to propose a plan that pays postpetition interest on nondischargeable debts under section 1328(a), but only to the extent that the debtor has disposable income available to pay such interest after payment in full of all allowed claims. Section 213(10) amends Bankruptcy

Code section 1325(a) to provide that if a chapter 13 debtor is required by judicial or administrative order or statute to pay a domestic support obligation, then the debtor must pay all such obligations pursuant to such order or statute that became payable postpetition as a condition of confirmation. Section 213(11) amends Bankruptcy Code section 1328(a) to condition the granting of a chapter 13 discharge on the debtor's payment of certain postpetition domestic support obligations.

*Sec. 214. Exceptions To Automatic Stay in Domestic Support Proceedings.* Under current law, section 362(b)(2) of the Bankruptcy Code excepts from the automatic stay the commencement or continuation of an action or proceeding: (1) for the establishment of paternity; or (2) the establishment or modification of an order for alimony, maintenance or support. It also permits the collection of such obligations from property that is not property of the estate. Section 214 makes several revisions to Bankruptcy Code section 362(b)(2). First, it replaces the reference to "alimony, maintenance or support" with "domestic support obligations." Second, it adds to section 362(b)(2) actions or proceedings concerning: (1) child custody or visitation; (2) the dissolution of a marriage (except to the extent such proceeding seeks division of property that is property of the estate); and (3) domestic violence. Third, it permits the withholding of income that is property of the estate or property of the debtor for payment of a domestic support obligation under a judicial or administrative order as well as the withholding, suspension, or restriction of a driver's license, or a professional, occupational or recreational license under state law, pursuant to section 466(a)(16) of the Social Security Act. Fourth, it authorizes the reporting of overdue support owed by a parent to any consumer reporting agency pursuant to section 466(a)(7) of the Social Security Act. Fifth, it permits the interception of tax refunds as authorized by sections 464 and 466(a)(3) of the Social Security Act or analogous state law. Sixth, it allows medical obligations, as specified under title IV of the Social Security Act, to be enforced notwithstanding the automatic stay.

*Sec. 215. Nondischargeability of Certain Debts for Alimony, Maintenance, and Support.* Section 215 of the Act amends Bankruptcy Code section 523(a)(5) to provide that a "domestic support obligation" (as defined in section 211 of the Act) is nondischargeable and eliminates Bankruptcy Code section 523(a)(18). Section 215(2) amends Bankruptcy Code section 523(c) to delete the reference to section 523(a)(15) in that provision. Section 215(3) amends section 523(a)(15) to provide that obligations to a spouse, former spouse, or a child of the debtor (not otherwise described in section 523(a)(5)) incurred in connection with a divorce or separation or related action are nondischargeable irrespective of the debtor's inability to pay such debts.

*Sec. 216. Continued Liability of Property.* Section 216(1) of the Act amends section 522(c) of the Bankruptcy Code to make exempt property liable for nondischargeable domestic support obligations notwithstanding any contrary provision of applicable nonbankruptcy law. Section 216(2) and (3) make conforming amendments to sections 522(f)(1)(A) and 522(g)(2) of the Bankruptcy Code.

*Sec. 217. Protection of Domestic Support Claims Against Preferential Transfer Motions.* Section 217 of the Act makes a conforming amendment to Bankruptcy Code section 547(c)(7) to provide that a bona fide payment of a debt for a domestic support obligation may not be avoided as a preferential transfer.

*Sec. 218. Disposable Income Defined.* Section 218 of the Act amends section 1225(b)(2)(A) of the Bankruptcy Code to provide that disposable income in a chapter 12 case does not include payments for postpetition domestic support obligations.

*Sec. 219. Collection of Child Support.* Section 219 amends sections 704, 1106, 1202, and 1302 of the Bankruptcy Code to require trustees in chapter 7, 11, 12, and 13 cases to provide certain notices to child support claimants and governmental enforcement agencies. In addition, the Act conforms internal statutory cross references to Bankruptcy Code section 523(a)(14A) and deletes the reference to Bankruptcy Code section 523(a)(14) with respect to chapter 13, as this provision is inapplicable to that chapter.

Section 219(a) requires a chapter 7 trustee to provide written notice to a domestic support claimant of the right to use the services of a state child support enforcement agency established under sections 464 and 466 of the Social Security Act in the state where the claimant resides for assistance in collecting child support during and after the bankruptcy case. The notice must include the agency's address and telephone number as well as explain the claimant's right to payment under the applicable chapter of the Bankruptcy Code. In addition, the trustee must provide written notice to the claimant and the agency of such claim and include the name, address, and telephone number of the child support claimant. At the time the debtor is granted a discharge, the trustee must notify both the child support claimant and the agency that the debtor was granted a discharge as well as supply them with the debtor's last known address, the last known name and address of the debtor's employer, and the name of each creditor holding a debt that is not discharged under section 523(a)(2), (4) or (14A) or holding a debt that was reaffirmed pursuant to Bankruptcy Code section 524. A claimant or agency may request the debtor's last known address from a creditor holding a debt that is not discharged under section 523(a)(2), (4) or (14A) or that is reaffirmed pursuant to section 524 of the Bankruptcy Code. A creditor who discloses such information, however, is not liable to the debtor or any other person by reason of such disclosure. Subsections (b), (c), and (d) of section 219 of the Act impose comparable requirements for chapter 11, 12, and 13 trustees.

*Sec. 220. Nondischargeability of Certain Educational Benefits and Loans.* Section 220 of the Act amends section 523(a)(8) of the Bankruptcy Code to provide that a debt for a qualified education loan (as defined in section 221(e)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code) is nondischargeable, unless excepting such debt from discharge would impose an undue hardship on the debtor and the debtor's dependents.

# Section 4: Automatic Stays in Domestic Support Proceedings

A Guide to Resources in the Law Library

**SCOPE:** Bibliographic sources relating to exceptions for automatic stays in domestic support proceedings under Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005, effective in cases commenced on or after October 17, 2005.

**DEFINITIONS:**

- **Automatic Stay (Domestic support obligation):**  
"(b) The filing of a petition under section 301, 302, or 303 of this title, or of an application under section 5(a)(3) of the Securities Investor Protection Act of 1970, does not operate as a stay—  
(2) under subsection (a)" [11 U.S.C. § 362\(b\)\(2\)](#)  
(2025)

**STATUTES:**

- [Title 11 — Bankruptcy](#) (2025)  
Automatic Stay — [11 U.S.C. § 362\(b\)\(2\)](#)

You can visit your local law library or [search the most recent U.S. Code](#) on the U.S. Code website.

**LEGISLATIVE:**

- Sec. 214. **Exceptions To Automatic Stay in Domestic Support Proceedings.** "Under current law, section 362(b)(2) of the Bankruptcy Code excepts from the automatic stay the commencement or continuation of an action or proceeding: (1) for the establishment of paternity; or (2) the establishment or modification of an order for alimony, maintenance or support. It also permits the collection of such obligations from property that is not property of the estate. Section 214 makes several revisions to Bankruptcy Code section 362(b)(2). First, it replaces the reference to 'alimony, maintenance or support' with 'domestic support obligations.' Second, it adds to section 362(b)(2) actions or proceedings concerning: (1) child custody or visitation; (2) the dissolution of a marriage (except to the extent such proceeding seeks division of property that is property of the estate); and (3) domestic violence. Third, it permits the withholding of income that is property of the estate or property of the debtor for payment of a domestic support obligation under a judicial or administrative order as well as the withholding, suspension, or restriction of a driver's license, or a professional, occupational or recreational license under state law, pursuant to section 466(a)(16) of the Social Security Act. Fourth, it authorizes the reporting of overdue support owed by a parent to any consumer reporting agency pursuant to section 466(a)(7) of the Social Security Act. Fifth, it permits the interception of tax refunds as authorized by sections 464 and 466(a)(3) of the Social Security Act or analogous state law. Sixth, it allows medical obligations, as specified under

title IV of the Social Security Act, to be enforced notwithstanding the automatic stay." [House Report \(Judiciary Committee\) No. 109-31 \(Part 1\), April 8, 2005](#) [To accompany S. 256] p. 61.

**FORMS:**

- *Bankruptcy and Domestic Relations Manual*, by Hon. William Houston Brown, Thomson West, 2024-2025 (also available on Westlaw).  
Appendix A  
A:5. Sample Motion to Modify the Automatic Stay  
A:6. Notice of a Motion or Objection—Official Form 420A

**CASES:**

Once you have identified useful cases, it is important to update the cases before you rely on them. Updating case law means checking to see if the cases are still good law. You can [contact your local law librarian](#) to learn about the tools available to you to update cases.

- [In re Kalsi](#), 637 B.R. 33, 35 (Bankr. S.D.N.Y. 2022) (March 3, 2022) "Upon the filing, the automatic stay paused the Debtor's Divorce Action. On March 31, 2020, the Court issued a memorandum opinion and order lifting the stay to allow Ms. Purewal and the Debtor to continue the Divorce Action (1) 'to determine the interest of the Debtor and Purewal in marital property and the Debtor's permanent domestic support obligations and (2) retaining jurisdiction over the distribution of property of the Debtor's estate."
- [Peterson v. Peterson](#), Superior Court, Judicial District of Stamford - Norwalk, No. FSTFA094015636S (Nov. 7, 2011) (52 Conn. L. Rptr. 734) (2011 WL 5925132). "A state court has jurisdiction to hear matters pertaining to the dissolution of marriage but not to enter orders relating to property that is part of a bankruptcy estate. 11 U.S.C. § 362(a)(1),(2) and (3). The filing of a bankruptcy petition does not operate as a stay of paternity actions, establishing, modifying, and enforcing domestic support orders, child custody, child visitation and domestic violence. 11 U.S.C. § 362(b)(2)(A)(i)(ii)(iii) and (v). 'The filing of a petition ... does not operate as a stay ... for the dissolution of a marriage, except that to the extent that such proceeding seeks to determine the division of property that is property of the estate.' 11 U.S.C. § 362(b)(2)(A)(iv)."

**TEXTS & TREATISES:**

- *Collier Family Law and the Bankruptcy Code*, by Henry J. Sommer and Margaret Dee McGarity, Matthew Bender, 2024.  
Chapter 5. Jurisdiction of the bankruptcy court in domestic relations matters and applicability of the automatic stay
  - § 5.01. The Overlap of Bankruptcy Jurisdiction and State Family Court Jurisdiction
  - § 5.02. Property of the Marital Estate and Property of the Bankruptcy Estate
  - § 5.03. The Scope of the Automatic Stay in Domestic Relations Matters
  - § 5.04. Termination of the Automatic Stay and Cases in Which Stay May Not Come Into Effect
  - § 5.05. Enforcement of the Automatic Stay
  - § 5.06. Relief from the Automatic Stay
  - § 5.07. The Codebtor Stay in Chapters 12 and 13
  - § 5.08. Nonautomatic Stays

Each of our law libraries own the Connecticut treatises cited. You can [contact](#) us or visit our [catalog](#) to determine which of our law libraries own the other treatises cited or to search for more treatises.

References to online databases refer to in-library use of these databases. Remote access is not available.

- 1 *Consumer Bankruptcy Law & Practice*, 13<sup>th</sup> ed., by Henry J. Sommer, National Consumer Law Center, 2023.
  - Chapter 9. Automatic Stays and Turnover of Property
    - § 9.4.6. Exceptions to the Automatic Stay
    - § 9.4.6.3. Family Law Exceptions
  - Chapter 18. Consumers As Creditors in Bankruptcy:  
Selected Topics
    - § 18.3. The Automatic Stay
    - § 18.3.2. Relief from the Stay
- 3 *Collier on Bankruptcy*, 16<sup>th</sup> ed., by Richard Levin and Henry J. Sommer, eds., Matthew Bender, 2025.
  - Chapter 362. Automatic stay
    - § 362.01. Overview of section 362
    - § 362.05. Exceptions to the stay; § 362(b)  
[2]—Family law proceedings; § 362(b)(2)
- 2 *Collier Bankruptcy Manual*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., by Richard Levin and Henry J. Sommer, eds. Matthew Bender, 2024.
  - Chapter 362 Automatic Stay
    - §362.01 Overview of 362
    - §362.03 Scope of Stay
      - [7] Acts to Create, Perfect or Enforce Any Lien Against Property of the Debtor; §362(a)(5)
        - [a] Domestic Support Obligation
- 2 *Lindley and Parley on Separation Agreements and Antenuptial Contracts*, 2nd ed., by Alexander Lindley, et al., Matthew Bender, 2025 (also available on Lexis).
  - Chapter 41. Bankruptcy
    - Part C. The Law
      - § 41.47. Procedural Aspect
      - § 41.47(2). Automatic Stay

#### **ENCYCLOPEDIAS:**

Encyclopedias and ALRs are available in print at some law library locations and accessible online at all law library locations.

Online databases are available for in-library use. Remote access is not available.

- 8A *CJS Bankruptcy* Thomson West, 2016 (Also available on Westlaw).
  - § 494. Domestic relations claims and proceedings exception to automatic stay

### **LAW REVIEWS:**

Public access to law review databases is available on-site at each of our [law libraries](#).

- Judge Margaret Dee McGarity, *The Automatic Stay In Family Law Proceedings: Do We Really Have to Stop?*, 65 Juvenile and Family Court Journal 1, No.1 ( Winter 2014).
- Edward W. Vopat, *Domestic Support Obligations Under the Revised Bankruptcy Code*, 17 Norton Journal of Bankruptcy Law and Practice (June 2008).
- David C. Hoskins and Ellen R. Welner, *Bankruptcy and Divorce: What Divorce Counsel Should Know About Bankruptcy*, 37 The Colorado Lawyer 35 (October 2008).
- Barbara H. Katz, *So You Think You Still Want to Practice Consumer Bankruptcy Law?* 16 Connecticut Lawyer No. 3, pg. 18 (2005).

# Section 5: Changes to Exemptions

*A Guide to Resources in the Law Library*

## **SCOPE:**

Bibliographic sources relating to changes in exempt property in domestic support proceedings under Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005, effective in cases commenced on or after October 17, 2005.

## **DEFINITIONS:**

- **Property no longer exempt:** "a debt of a kind specified in paragraph (1) or (5) of section 523(a) (in which case, notwithstanding any provision of applicable nonbankruptcy law to the contrary, such property shall be liable for a debt of a kind specified in such paragraph.)" [11 U.S.C. 522\(c\)\(1\)](#) (2025).

## **STATUTES:**

You can visit your local law library or [search the most recent U.S. Code](#) on the U.S. Code website to confirm that you are accessing the most up-to-date laws.

- [Title 11 – Bankruptcy](#) (2025)  
Exemptions – [11 U.S.C. 522\(c\)\(1\)](#)  
Exceptions to discharge – [11 U.S.C. § 523\(a\)\(5\)](#)  
Chapter 13 – Discharge - [11 U.S.C. § 1328](#)

## **LEGISLATIVE:**

- **Continuing Liability Of Property:** "Section 216(1) of the Act [Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005] amends section 522(c) of the Bankruptcy Code to make exempt property liable for nondischargeable domestic support obligations notwithstanding any contrary provision of applicable nonbankruptcy law. Section 216(2) and (3) make conforming amendments to sections 522(f)(1)(A) and 522(g)(2) of the Bankruptcy Code." [House Report \(Judiciary Committee\) No. 109-31 \(Part 1\), April 8, 2005](#) [To accompany S. 256] p. 61.

## **CASES:**

Once you have identified useful cases, it is important to update the cases before you rely on them. Updating case law means checking to see if the cases are still good law. You can [contact your local law librarian](#) to learn about the tools available to you to update cases.

- [In re Virgili](#), 09-31897 (LMW), 2012 WL 694318 (Bankr. D. Conn. (Mar. 1, 2012) (2012 WL 694318). "As noted above, the Debtor elected the Section 522(d) 'federal list' of exemptions pursuant to Bankruptcy Code § 522(b)(2). Section 522(d) provides in relevant part: 'The following property may be exempted ... (10) [t]he debtor's right to receive ... (D) alimony, support, or separate maintenance, to the extent reasonably necessary for the support of the debtor and any dependent of the debtor....' 11 U.S.C.A. § 522(d) (West 2012). What constitutes 'alimony' within the purview of Section 522(d)(10)(D) 'is a question of federal, not state, law,' [DeHart v. Miller](#) (In re Miller), 424 B.R. 171, 174 (Bankr.M.D.Pa.2010). The analysis of what constitutes 'alimony' for Section 522(d)(10)(D) purposes is the same as is used to determine what constitutes 'alimony' under the pre-BAPCPA version of 11 U.S.C. § 523(a)(5) and under the current version of 11 U.S.C. § 101(14A)(B). See [In re Joseph](#), 157 B.R. 514, 518 (Bankr.D.Conn.1993) (Krechevsky, J.) ('There is no readily apparent reason why a

bankruptcy court should use different standards in reviewing alimony awards in the nondischargeability instance and in the exemption instance.'); cf. H.Rep. No. 95-595, at 362 (1977), *reprinted in* 1978 U.S.C.C.A.N. 5963, 6318 ('Paragraph (10) [of Section 522(d)] exempts certain benefits that are akin to future earnings of the debtor.'").

## **TEXTS & TREATISES:**

Each of our law libraries own the Connecticut treatises cited. You can [contact](#) us or visit our [catalog](#) to determine which of our law libraries own the other treatises cited or to search for more treatises.

References to online databases refer to in-library use of these databases. Remote access is not available.

- *Collier Family Law and the Bankruptcy Code*, by Henry J. Sommer and Margaret Dee McGarity, Matthew Bender, 2024.

Chapter 6. The Dischargeability of Marital Obligations in Bankruptcy

- §6.01 Introduction
- §6.02 The Bankruptcy Discharge
- §6.03 The Exception to Discharge for Domestic Support Obligations; General Principles
- §6.04 Factors Considered in Distinguishing Alimony, Maintenance and Support Claims from Property Settlement Claims
- §6.05 Particular Types of Obligations
- §6.07 Procedure for Determining Dischargeability of Domestic Support Obligations
- §6.07A The Exception to Discharge for Other Obligations Incurred in Connection with Divorce or Separation
- §6.08 Applicability of Other Exceptions to Discharge in Family Law Cases
- §6.09 Objections to Discharge

- 1 *Consumer Bankruptcy Law & Practice*, 13<sup>th</sup> ed., by Henry J. Sommer, National Consumer Law Center, 2023.

Chapter 10. Exemptions

- § 10.2. What Property is Exempt?
- § 10.2.1. The Choice of State or Federal Exemptions
- § 10.2.2. The Federal Bankruptcy Exemptions
  - § 10.2.2.2. Homestead—§ 522(d)(1)
  - § 10.2.2.3. Motor vehicle—§ 522(d)(2)
  - § 10.2.2.5. Jewelry—§ 522(d)(4)
  - § 10.2.2.6. Any property—§ 522(d)(5)
  - § 10.2.2.7. Tools of the trade—§ 522(d)(6)

- 4 *Collier on Bankruptcy*, 16<sup>th</sup> ed., by Richard Levin and Henry J. Sommer, eds., Matthew Bender, 2025.

Chapter 522. Exemptions

- 9D *Am. Jur. 2d* Bankruptcy Thomson West, 2016 (Also available on Westlaw).

§ 3584. Nondischargeability of debts for domestic support obligations, generally

## **ENCYCLOPEDIAS:**

Encyclopedias and ALRs are available in print at some law library locations and accessible online at all law library locations.

**LAW REVIEWS:**

Public access to law review databases is available on-site at each of our [law libraries](#).

- Amanda Nowak, [Where's My Refund? How to Address Overpaid Domestic Support Obligations Under the Bankruptcy Code](#), 36 [Emory Bankruptcy Developments Journal](#) 511 (2020).
- Becker McKay Wyckoff, [Comment: They're Just Letting Anyone In These Days: The Expansion of §523\(a\)\(5\)'s "Domestic Support Obligation" Exception to Discharge](#), 28 [Emory Bankruptcy Developments Journal](#) 637 (2012).
- Edward W. Vopat, [Domestic Support Obligations Under the Revised Bankruptcy Code](#), 17 [Norton Journal of Bankruptcy Law and Practice](#) (June 2008).
- David C. Hoskins and Ellen R. Welner, [Bankruptcy and Divorce: What Divorce Counsel Should Know About Bankruptcy](#), 37 [The Colorado Lawyer](#) 35 (October 2008).
- Barbara H. Katz, [So You Think You Still Want to Practice Consumer Bankruptcy Law?](#) 16 [Connecticut Lawyer](#) No. 3, pg. 18 (2005).

# Section 6: Preference Change

*A Guide to Resources in the Law Library*

**SCOPE:** Bibliographic sources relating to changes against Preferential Transfer Motions in domestic support proceedings under Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005, effective in cases commenced on or after October 17, 2005.

**DEFINITIONS:**

- **Protection of domestic support claims against Preferential Transfer Motions:** "The trustee may not avoid under this section a transfer—(7) to the extent such transfer was a bona fide payment of debt for a domestic support obligation . . . ." [11 U.S.C. 547 \(c\) \(7\)](#) (2025).

**STATUTES:**

- [Title 11 — Bankruptcy](#) (2025)  
Preferences — [11 U.S.C. 547 \(c\) \(7\)](#)

You can visit your local law library or [search the most recent U.S. Code](#) on the U.S. Code website to confirm that you are accessing the most up-to-date laws.

**LEGISLATIVE:**

- **Protection of Domestic Support Claims against Preferential Transfer Motions:** "Section 217 of the Act makes a conforming amendment to Bankruptcy Code section 547(c)(7) to provide that a bona fide payment of a debt for a domestic support obligation may not be avoided as a preferential transfer." [House Report \(Judiciary Committee\) No. 109-31 \(Part 1\), April 8, 2005](#) [To accompany S. 256] p. 62.

**FORMS:**

- *Bankruptcy and Domestic Relations Manual*, by Hon. William Houston Brown, Thomson West, 2024-2025 (also available on Westlaw).  
Appendix A  
A:14. Sample Preference Complaint

**TEXTS & TREATISES:**

Each of our law libraries own the Connecticut treatises cited. You can [contact](#) us or visit our [catalog](#) to determine which of our law libraries own the other treatises cited or to search for more treatises.

- *Collier Family Law and the Bankruptcy Code*, by Henry J. Sommer and Margaret Dee McGarity, Matthew Bender, 2024.  
**Chapter 7. Lien and Transfer Avoidance in Connection with Marital or Family Obligations**  
§7.04 Avoidance of Judicial Liens Under Section 522(f)(1)(A)
- 1 *Consumer Bankruptcy Law & Practice*, 13<sup>th</sup> ed., by Henry J. Sommer, National Consumer Law Center, 2023.  
Chapter 10. Exemptions  
§ 10.4. Making the Most of Exemptions  
§ 10.4.2.6.4. Preferences—§ 547  
§ 10.4.2.6.4.1. Overview  
§ 10.4.2.6.4.2. Exceptions to preference avoiding power

§ 10.4.2.6.4.3. Debtor's use of preference avoiding power

- 5 *Collier on Bankruptcy*, 16<sup>th</sup> ed., by Richard Levin and Henry J. Sommer, eds., Matthew Bender, 2025.  
Chapter 547. Preferences
  - § 547.01. Overview of section 547
  - § 547.04. Transfers excepted from avoidance under section 547(c)
    - [7]—Alimony, maintenance or support; § 547(c)(5)

**ENCYCLOPEDIAS:**

Encyclopedias and ALRs are available in print at some law library locations and accessible online at all law library locations.

Online databases are available for in-library use. Remote access is not available.

- 9D *Am. Jur. 2d* Bankruptcy Thomson West, 2016 (Also available on Westlaw).  
§ 3584. Nondischargeability of debts for domestic support obligations, generally

**LAW REVIEWS:**

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- David C. Hoskins and Ellen R. Welner, *Bankruptcy and Divorce: What Divorce Counsel Should Know About Bankruptcy*, 37 The Colorado Lawyer 35 (2008).
- Barbara H. Katz, *So You Think You Still Want to Practice Consumer Bankruptcy Law?* 16 Connecticut Lawyer No. 3, pg. 18 (2005).
- Edward W. Vopat, *Domestic Support Obligations Under the Revised Bankruptcy Code*, 17 Norton Journal of Bankruptcy Law and Practice (2008).

# Section 7: Collection of Child Support

*A Guide to Resources in the Law Library*

**SCOPE:** Bibliographic sources relating to collection of child support and changes in trustees duties (every chapter) under Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005, effective in cases commenced on or after October 17, 2005.

**SEE ALSO:** [Section 6: Bankruptcy and Child Support](#) (Child Support Research Guide)

**STATUTES:**

You can visit your local law library or [search the most recent U.S. Code](#) on the U.S. Code website to confirm that you are accessing the most up-to-date laws.

- [Title 11 — Bankruptcy](#) (2025)  
Duties of Trustee — [11 U.S.C. 704](#)  
Duties of Trustee and Examiner — [11 U.S.C. 1106](#)  
Trustee — [11 U.S.C. 1202](#)  
Trustee — [11 U.S.C. 1302](#)

**LEGISLATIVE:**

- Section 219. **Collection of child support:** "Section 219 amends sections 704, 1106, 1202, and 1302 of the Bankruptcy Code to **require trustees in chapter 7, 11, 12, and 13 cases to provide certain notices to child support claimants and governmental enforcement agencies.** In addition, the Act conforms internal statutory cross references to Bankruptcy Code section 523(a)(14A) and deletes the reference to Bankruptcy Code section 523(a)(14) with respect to chapter 13, as this provision is inapplicable to that chapter. Section 219(a) requires a chapter 7 trustee to provide written notice to a domestic support claimant of the right to use the services of a state child support enforcement agency established under sections 464 and 466 of the Social Security Act in the state where the claimant resides for assistance in collecting child support during and after the bankruptcy case. The notice must include the agency's address and telephone number as well as explain the claimant's right to payment under the applicable chapter of the Bankruptcy Code. In addition, the trustee must provide written notice to the claimant and the agency of such claim and include the name, address, and telephone number of the child support claimant. At the time the debtor is granted a discharge, the trustee must notify both the child support claimant and the agency that the debtor was granted a discharge as well as supply them with the debtor's last known address, the last known name and address of the debtor's employer, and the name of each creditor holding a debt that is not discharged under section 523(a)(2), (4) or (14A) or holding a debt that was reaffirmed pursuant to Bankruptcy Code section 524. A claimant or agency may request the debtor's last known address from a creditor holding a debt that is not discharged under section 523(a)(2), (4) or (14A) or that is reaffirmed pursuant to

section 524 of the Bankruptcy Code. A creditor who discloses such information, however, is not liable to the debtor or any other person by reason of such disclosure. Subsections (b), (c), and (d) of section 219 of the Act impose comparable requirements for chapter 11, 12, and 13 trustees.” [House Report \(Judiciary Committee\) No. 109-31 \(Part 1\), April 8, 2005](#) [To accompany S. 256] p. 62. (Emphasis added.)

## **TEXTS & TREATISES:**

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- *Collier Family Law and the Bankruptcy Code*, by Henry J. Sommer and Margaret Dee McGarity, Matthew Bender, 2024.
  - Chapter 1. An Overview of the Bankruptcy Process as It Affects Family Law Issues
  - Chapter 2. Property Interests of the Debtor and Other Family Members Affected by a Bankruptcy Case
  - Chapter 3. Liabilities Arising in a Marriage or Family Relationship
  - Chapter 5. Jurisdiction of the Bankruptcy Court in Domestic Relations Matters and Applicability of the Automatic Stay
  - Chapter 6. The Dischargeability of Marital Obligations in Bankruptcy
  - Chapter 7. Lien and Transfer Avoidance in Connection with Marital or Family Obligations
  - Chapter 8. Chapter 13 and the Divorced or Separated Debtor
  - Chapter 9. Effects of Bankruptcy on Nonmarital Family Relationships

- 1 *Consumer Bankruptcy Law & Practice*, 13<sup>th</sup> ed., by Henry J. Sommer, National Consumer Law Center, 2023.
  - § 2.6. The Bankruptcy Trustee
- 6 *Collier on Bankruptcy*, 16<sup>th</sup> ed., by Richard Levin and Henry J. Sommer, eds., Matthew Bender, 2025.
  - Chapter 704. Duties of trustee

## **ENCYCLOPEDIAS:**

Encyclopedias and ALRs are available in print at some law library locations and accessible online at all law library locations.

- 9D *Am. Jur. 2d* Bankruptcy Thomson West, 2016 (Also available on Westlaw).
  - § 3584. Nondischargeability of debts for domestic support obligations, generally

## **LAW REVIEWS:**

Public access to law review databases is available on-site at each of our [law libraries](#).

- Peter C. Alexander, *Bankruptcy, Divorce, and the Rooker-Feldman Doctrine: A Potential Marriage of Convenience*, 13 *Journal of Law and Family Studies* 81 (2011).
- Edward W. Vopat, *Domestic Support Obligations Under the Revised Bankruptcy Code*, 17 *Norton Journal of Bankruptcy Law and Practice* (June 2008).

- David C. Hoskins and Ellen R. Welner, *Bankruptcy and Divorce: What Divorce Counsel Should Know About Bankruptcy*, 37 The Colorado Lawyer 35 (October 2008).
- Barbara H. Katz, *So You Think You Still Want to Practice Consumer Bankruptcy Law?* 16 Connecticut Lawyer No. 3, pg. 18 (2005).