

§ 378.5

charges were paid (except when the original freight bill is not a paper document but is electronically transmitted) and by freight bill payment information.

(d) Regardless of the provisions of paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) of this section, the failure to provide sufficient information and documentation to allow a carrier to conduct an investigation and pay or decline the claim within the allowable time limitation shall not constitute grounds for disallowance of the claim. Rather, the carrier shall comply with § 378.5(c) to obtain the additional information required.

(e) A carrier shall accept copies instead of the original documents required to be submitted in this section where the carrier is furnished with an agreement entered into by the claimant which indemnifies the carrier for subsequent duplicate claims which might be filed and supported by the original documents.

[43 FR 41040, Sept. 14, 1978, as amended at 44 FR 4679, Jan. 23, 1979; 47 FR 12804, Mar. 25, 1982; 62 FR 15424, Apr. 1, 1997]

§ 378.5 Investigation of claims.

(a) Upon receipt of a claim, whether written or otherwise, the processing carrier shall promptly initiate an investigation and establish a file, as required by § 378.6.

(b) If a carrier discovers an overcharge, duplicate payment, or overcollection which has not been the subject of a claim, it shall promptly initiate an investigation and comply with the provisions in § 378.9.

(c) In the event the carrier processing the claim requires information or documents in addition to that submitted with the claim, the carrier shall promptly notify the claimant and request the information required. This includes notifying the claimant that a written or electronically transmitted claim must be filed before the carrier becomes subject to the time limits for settling such a claim under § 378.8.

[43 FR 41040, Sept. 14, 1978, as amended at 47 FR 12804, Mar. 25, 1982; 62 FR 15424, 15425, Apr. 1, 1997]

§ 378.6 Claim records.

At the time a claim is received the carrier shall create a separate file and

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assign it a successive claim file number and note that number on all documents filed in support of the claim and all records and correspondence with respect to the claim, including the written or electronic acknowledgment of receipt required under § 378.7. If pertinent to the disposition of the claim, the carrier shall also note that number on the shipping order and delivery receipt, if any, covering the shipment involved.

[47 FR 12804, Mar. 25, 1982, as amended at 62 FR 15425, Apr. 1, 1997]

§ 378.7 Acknowledgment of claims.

Upon receipt of a written or electronically transmitted claim, the carrier shall acknowledge its receipt in writing or electronically to the claimant within 30 days after the date of receipt except when the carrier shall have paid or declined in writing or electronically within that period. The carrier shall include the date of receipt in its written or electronic claim which shall be placed in the file for that claim.

[47 FR 12804, Mar. 25, 1982]

§ 378.8 Disposition of claims.

The processing carrier shall pay, decline to pay, or settle each written or electronically communicated claim within 60 days after its receipt by that carrier, except where the claimant and the carrier agree in writing or electronically to a specific extension based upon extenuating circumstances. If the carrier declines to pay a claim or makes settlement in an amount different from that sought, the carrier shall notify the claimant in writing or electronically, of the reason(s) for its action, citing tariff authority or other pertinent information developed as a result of its investigation.

[47 FR 12804, Mar. 25, 1982]

§ 378.9 Disposition of unidentified payments, overcharges, duplicate payments, and overcollections not supported by claims.

(a)(1) Carriers shall establish procedures for identifying and properly applying all unidentified payments. If a carrier does not have sufficient information with which properly to apply

such a payment, the carrier shall notify the payor of the unidentified payment within 60 days of receipt of the payment and request information which will enable it to identify the payment. If the carrier does not receive the information requested within 90 days from the date of the notice, the carrier may treat the unidentified payment as a payment in fact of freight charges owing to it. Following the 90-day period, the regular claims procedure under this part shall be applicable.

(2) Notice shall be in writing and clearly indicate that it is a final notice and not a bill. Notice shall include: The check number, amount, and date; the payor's name; and any additional basic information the carrier is able to provide. The final notice also must inform payor that: (i) Applicable regulations allow the carrier to conditionally retain the payment as revenue in the absence of a timely response by the payor; and (ii) following the 90-day period the regular claims procedure shall be applicable.

(3) Upon a carrier's receipt of information from the payor, the carrier shall, within 14 days: (i) Make a complete refund of such funds to the payor; or (ii) notify the payor that the information supplied is not sufficient to identify the unapplied payment and request additional information; or (iii) notify the payor of the carrier's determination that such payment was applicable to particular freight charges lawfully due the carrier. Where no refund is made by the carrier, the carrier shall advise the payor of its right to file a formal claim for refund with the carrier in accordance with the regular claims procedure under this part.

(b) When a carrier which participates in a transportation movement, but did not collect the transportation charges, finds that an overpayment has been made, that carrier shall immediately notify the collecting carrier. When the collecting carrier (when single or joint line haul) discovers or is notified by such a participating carrier that an overcharge, duplicate payment, or overcollection exists for any transportation charge which has not been the subject of a claim, the carrier shall create a file as if a claim had

been submitted and shall record in the file the date it discovered or was notified of the overpayment. The carrier that collected the charges shall then refund the amount of the overpayment to the person who paid the transportation charges or to the person that made duplicate payment within 30 days from the date of such discovery or notification.

[43 FR 41040, Sept. 14, 1978, as amended at 44 FR 66832, Nov. 21, 1979]

PART 379—PRESERVATION OF RECORDS

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APPENDIX A TO PART 379—SCHEDULE OF RECORDS AND PERIODS OF RETENTION

AUTHORITY: 49 U.S.C. 13301, 14122 and 14123; and 49 CFR 1.73.

SOURCE: 62 FR 32044, June 12, 1997, unless otherwise noted.

EDITORIAL NOTE: Nomenclature changes to part 379 appear at 66 FR 49871, Oct. 1, 2001.

§ 379.1 Applicability.

(a) The preservation of record rules contained in this part shall apply to the following:

- (1) Motor carriers and brokers;
- (2) Water carriers; and
- (3) Household goods freight forwarders.

(b) This part applies also to the preservation of accounts, records and memoranda of traffic associations, weighing and inspection bureaus, and other joint activities maintained by or on behalf of companies listed in paragraph (a) of this section.

§ 379.3 Records required to be retained.

Companies subject to this part shall retain records for the minimum retention periods provided in appendix A to this part. After the required retention periods, the records may be destroyed at the discretion of each company's management. It shall be the obligation