

§ 386.81

Chief Counsel or Deputy Chief Counsel of the FMCSA may bring, or request the United States Attorney General to bring, an action in the appropriate United States District Court for an order suspending or restricting the transportation by motor vehicle of the hazardous material or for such other order as is necessary to eliminate or ameliorate the imminent hazard, as provided by 49 U.S.C. 5122. In this paragraph, “imminent hazard” means the existence of a condition that presents a substantial likelihood that death, serious illness, severe personal injury, or a substantial endangerment to health, property, or the environment may occur before a notice of investigation proceeding, or other administrative hearing or formal proceeding, to abate the risk of harm can be completed.

(b)(1) Whenever it is determined that a violation of 49 U.S.C. 31502 or the Motor Carrier Safety Act of 1984, as amended, or the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1986, as amended, or a regulation issued under such section or Acts, or a combination of such violations, poses an imminent hazard to safety, the Director of the Office of Enforcement and Compliance or a State Director, or his or her delegate, shall order a vehicle or employee operating such vehicle out of service, or order an employer to cease all or part of the employer’s commercial motor vehicle operations, as provided by 49 U.S.C. 521(b)(5). In making any such order, no restrictions shall be imposed on any employee or employer beyond that required to abate the hazard. In this paragraph, “imminent hazard” means any condition of vehicle, employee, or commercial motor vehicle operations which substantially increases the likelihood of serious injury or death if not discontinued immediately.

(2) Upon the issuance of an order under paragraph (b)(1) of this section, the motor carrier employer or driver employee shall comply immediately with such order. Opportunity for review shall be provided in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 554, except that such review shall occur not later than 10 days after issuance of such order, as provided by section 213(b) of the Motor Carrier Safety Act of 1984 (49 U.S.C. 521(b)(5)). An order to an employer to

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cease all or part of its operations shall not prevent vehicles in transit at the time the order is served from proceeding to their immediate destinations, unless any such vehicle or its driver is specifically ordered out of service forthwith. However, vehicles and drivers proceeding to their immediate destination shall be subject to compliance upon arrival.

(3) For purposes of this section the term “immediate destination” is the next scheduled stop of the vehicle already in motion where the cargo on board can be safely secured.

(4) Failure to comply immediately with an order issued under this section shall subject the motor carrier employer or driver to penalties prescribed in subpart G of this part.

[50 FR 40306, Oct. 2, 1985, as amended at 53 FR 2036, Jan. 26, 1988; 53 FR 50970, Dec. 19, 1988; 56 FR 10184, Mar. 11, 1991; 65 FR 7756, Feb. 16, 2000; 65 FR 58664, Oct. 2, 2000]

Subpart G—Penalties

SOURCE: 56 FR 10184, Mar. 11, 1991, unless otherwise noted.

§ 386.81 General.

(a) The amounts of civil penalties that can be assessed for regulatory violations subject to the proceedings in this subchapter are established in the statutes granting enforcement powers. The determination of the actual civil penalties assessed in each proceeding is based on those defined limits or minimums and consideration of information available at the time the claim is made concerning the nature, gravity of the violation and, with respect to the violator, the degree of culpability, history of prior offenses, ability to pay, effect on ability to continue to do business, and such other matters as justice and public safety may require. In addition to these factors, a civil penalty assessed under 49 U.S.C. 14901(a) and (d) concerning household goods is also based on the degree of harm caused to a shipper and whether the shipper has been adequately compensated before institution of the civil penalty proceeding. In adjudicating the claims and orders under the administrative procedures herein, additional information

may be developed regarding these factors that may affect the final amount of the claim.

(b) When assessing penalties for violations of notices and orders or settling claims based on these assessments, consideration will be given to good faith efforts to achieve compliance with the terms of the notices and orders.

[56 FR 10184, Mar. 11, 1991, as amended at 65 FR 7756, Feb. 16, 2000]

§ 386.82 Civil penalties for violations of notices and orders.

(a) Additional civil penalties are chargeable for violations of notices and orders which are issued under civil forfeiture proceedings pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 521(b). These notices and orders are as follows:

(1) Notice to abate—§ 386.11 (b)(2) and (c)(1)(iv);

(2) Notice to post—§ 386.11(b)(3);

(3) Final order—§ 386.14, § 386.17, § 386.22, and § 386.61; and

(4) Out-of-service order—§ 386.72(b)(1).

(b) A schedule of these additional penalties is provided in the appendix A to this part. All the penalties are maximums, and discretion will be retained to meet special circumstances by setting penalties for violations of notices and orders, in some cases, at less than the maximum.

(c) Claims for penalties provided in this section and in the appendix A to this part shall be made through the civil forfeiture proceedings contained in this part. The issues to be decided in such proceedings will be limited to whether violations of notices and orders occurred as claimed and the appropriate penalty for such violations. Nothing contained herein shall be construed to authorize the reopening of a matter already finally adjudicated under this part.

[56 FR 10184, Mar. 11, 1991, as amended at 67 FR 61821, Oct. 2, 2002; 70 FR 28486, May 18, 2005]

§ 386.83 Sanction for failure to pay civil penalties or abide by payment plan; operation in interstate commerce prohibited.

(a)(1) *General rule.* A CMV owner or operator that fails to pay a civil penalty in full within 90 days after the

date specified for payment by the FMCSA's final agency order is prohibited from operating in interstate commerce starting on the next (*i.e.*, the 91st) day. The prohibition continues until the FMCSA has received full payment of the penalty.

(2) *Civil penalties paid in installments.*

The FMCSA Service Center may allow a CMV owner or operator to pay a civil penalty in installments. If the CMV owner or operator fails to make an installment payment on schedule, the payment plan is void and the entire debt is payable immediately. A CMV owner or operator that fails to pay the full outstanding balance of its civil penalty within 90 days after the date of the missed installment payment, is prohibited from operating in interstate commerce on the next (*i.e.*, the 91st) day. The prohibition continues until the FMCSA has received full payment of the entire penalty.

(3) *Appeals to Federal Court.* If the CMV owner or operator appeals the final agency order to a Federal Circuit Court of Appeals, the terms and payment due date of the final agency order are not stayed unless the Court so directs.

(b) *Show Cause Proceeding.* (1) The FMCSA will notify a CMV owner or operator in writing if it has not received payment within 45 days after the date specified for payment by the final agency order or the date of a missed installment payment. The notice will include a warning that failure to pay the entire penalty within 90 days after payment was due, will result in the CMV owner or operator being prohibited from operating in interstate commerce.

(2) The notice will order the CMV owner or operator to show cause why it should not be prohibited from operating in interstate commerce on the 91st day after the date specified for payment. The prohibition may be avoided only by submitting to the Chief Safety Officer:

(i) Evidence that the respondent has paid the entire amount due; or

(ii) Evidence that the respondent has filed for bankruptcy under chapter 11, title 11, United States Code. Respondents in bankruptcy must also submit