

(H) Violations by Small Entities

In compliance with the mandate of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996, under appropriate circumstances, the issuance of a penalty under section 593A may be waived for businesses qualifying as small business entities. Procedures that were established for small business entities regarding violations of 19 U.S.C. 1592 in Treasury Decision 97-46 published in the FEDERAL REGISTER (62 FR 30378) are also applicable for small entities regarding violations of section 593A.

[T.D. 00-5, 65 FR 3809, Jan. 25, 2000]

PART 172—CLAIMS FOR LIQUIDATED DAMAGES; PENALTIES SECURED BY BONDS

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AUTHORITY: 19 U.S.C. 66, 1618, 1623, 1624; 46 U.S.C. App. 320.

SOURCE: T.D. 00-57, 65 FR 53578, Sept. 5, 2000, unless otherwise noted.

§ 172.0 Scope.

This part contains provisions relating to petitions for relief from claims for liquidated damages arising under any Customs bond and penalties incurred which are secured by the conditions of the International Carrier Bond (see §113.64 of this Chapter). This part does not relate to petitions on unsecured fines or penalties or seizures and forfeitures, nor does it relate to petitions for the restoration of proceeds of sale pursuant to 19 U.S.C. 1613.

Subpart A—Notice of Claim and Application for Relief

§ 172.1 Notice of liquidated damages or penalty incurred and right to petition for relief.

(a) *Notice of liquidated damages or penalty incurred.* When there is a failure to meet the conditions of any bond posted with Customs or when a violation occurs which results in assessment of a penalty which is secured by a Customs bond, the principal will be notified in writing of any liability for liquidated damages or penalty incurred and a demand will be made for payment. The sureties on such bond will also be notified in writing of any such liability at the same time.

(b) *Notice of right to petition for relief.* The notice will inform the principal that application may be made for relief from payment of liquidated damages or penalty.

§ 172.2 Petition for relief.

(a) *To whom addressed.* Petitions for the cancellation of any claim for liquidated damages or remission or mitigation of a fine or penalty secured by a Customs bond incurred under any law or regulation administered by Customs must be addressed to the Fines, Penalties, and Forfeitures Officer designated in the notice of claim.

(b) *Signature.* The petition for remission or mitigation must be signed by the petitioner, his attorney-at-law or a Customs broker. If the petitioner is a corporation, the petition may be signed by an officer or responsible supervisory official of the corporation, or responsible employee representative of the corporation. Electronic signatures are

acceptable. The deciding Customs officer may, in his or her discretion and with articulable cause, require proof of representation before consideration of any petition.

(c) *Form.* The petition for cancellation, remission or mitigation need not be in any particular form. Customs can require that the petition and any documents submitted in support of the petition be in English or be accompanied by an English translation. The petition must set forth the following:

(1) The date and place of the violation; and
 (2) The facts and circumstances relied upon by the petitioner to justify cancellation, remission or mitigation.

(d) *False statement in petition.* A false statement contained in a petition may subject the petitioner to prosecution under the provisions of 18 U.S.C. 1001.

§ 172.3 Filing a petition.

(a) *Where filed.* A petition for relief must be filed by the bond principal with the Fines, Penalties, and Forfeitures office whose address is given in the notice.

(b) *When filed.* Petitions for relief must be filed within 60 days from the date of mailing to the bond principal the notice of claim for liquidated damages or penalty secured by a bond.

(c) *Extensions.* The Fines, Penalties, and Forfeitures Officer is empowered to grant extensions of time to file petitions when the circumstances so warrant.

(d) *Number of copies.* The petition must be filed in duplicate unless filed electronically.

(e) *Exception for certain cases.* If a penalty or claim for liquidated damages is assessed and fewer than 180 days remain from the date of penalty or liquidated damages notice before the statute of limitations may be asserted as a defense, the Fines, Penalties, and Forfeitures Officer may specify in the notice a reasonable period of time, but not less than 7 working days, for the filing of a petition for relief. If a petition is not filed within the time specified, the matter will be transmitted promptly to the appropriate Office of the Chief Counsel for referral to the Department of Justice.

§ 172.4 Demand on surety.

If the principal fails to file a petition for relief or fails to comply in the prescribed time with a decision to mitigate a penalty or cancel a claim for liquidated damages issued with regard to a petition for relief, Customs will make a demand for payment on surety. The surety will then have 60 days from the date of the demand to file a petition for relief.

Subpart B—Action on Petitions

§ 172.11 Petitions acted on by Fines, Penalties, and Forfeitures Officer.

(a) *Mitigation or cancellation authority.* Upon receipt of a petition for relief submitted pursuant to the provisions of section 618 or 623 of the Tariff Act of 1930, as amended (19 U.S.C. 1618 or 19 U.S.C. 1623), or section 320 of title 46, United States Code App. (46 U.S.C. App. 320), the Fines, Penalties, and Forfeitures Officer, notwithstanding any other law or regulation, is empowered to mitigate any penalty or cancel any claim for liquidated damages on such terms and conditions as, under law and in view of the circumstances, he or she shall deem appropriate in accordance with appropriate delegations of authority.

(b) *When violation did not occur.* Notwithstanding any other delegation of authority, the Fines, Penalties, and Forfeitures Officer is always empowered to cancel any case without payment of a mitigated or cancellation amount when he or she definitely determines that the act or omission forming the basis of any claim of penalty or claim for liquidated damages did not occur.

§ 172.12 Petitions acted on at Customs Headquarters.

Upon receipt of a petition for relief filed pursuant to the provisions of section 618 or 623 of the Tariff Act of 1930, as amended (19 U.S.C. 1618 or 19 U.S.C. 1623), or section 320 of title 46, United States Code App. (46 U.S.C. App. 320), involving fines, penalties, and claims for liquidated damages which are outside of his or her delegated authority the Fines, Penalties, and Forfeitures Officer will refer that petition to the