PART 1903-INSPECTIONS, CITATIONS AND PROPOSED PENALTIES

(§§ 1903.14 to 1903.15) - English version typeset from the official eCFR XML (version of October 16, 2026)

§ 1903.14 Citations; notices of de minimis violations; policy regarding employee rescue activities.

(a) The Area Director shall review the inspection report of the Compliance Safety and Health Officer. If, on the basis of the report the Area Director believes that the employer has violated a requirement of section 5 of the Act, of any standard, rule or order promulgated pursuant to section 6 of the Act, or of any substantive rule published in this chapter, he shall, if appropriate, consult with the Regional Solicitor, and he shall issue to the employer either a citation or a notice of de minimis violations which have no direct or immediate relationship to safety or health. An appropriate citation or notice of de minimis violations shall be issued even though after being informed of an alleged violation by the Compliance Safety and Health Officer, the employer immediately abates, or initiates steps to abate, such alleged violation. Any citation or notice of de minimis violations shall be issued with reasonable promptness after termination of the inspection. No citation may be issued under this section after the expiration of 6 months following the occurrence of any alleged violation.

(b) Any citation shall describe with particularity the nature of the alleged violation, including a reference to the provision(s) of the Act, standard, rule, regulation, or order alleged to have been violated. Any citation shall also fix a reasonable time or times for the abatement of the alleged violation.

(c) If a citation or notice of de minimis violations is issued for a violation alleged in a request for inspection under § 1903.11(a) or a notification of violation under § 1903.11(c), a copy of the citation or notice of de minimis violations shall also be sent to the employee or representative of employees who made such request or notification.

(d) After an inspection, if the Area Director determines that a citation is not warranted with respect to a danger or violation alleged to exist in a request for inspection under § 1903.11(a) or a notification of violation under § 1903.11(c), the informal review procedures prescribed in § 1903.12(a) shall be applicable. After considering all views presented, the Assistant Regional Director shall affirm the determination of the Area Director, order a reinspection, or issue a citation if he believes that the inspection disclosed a violation. The Assistant Regional Director shall furnish the complaining party and the employer with written notification of his determination and the reasons therefor. The determination of the Assistant Regional Director shall be final and not subject to review.

(e) Every citation shall state that the issuance of a citation does not constitute a finding that a violation of the Act has occurred unless there is a failure to contest as provided for in the Act or, if contested, unless the citation is affirmed by the Review Commission.

(f) No citation may be issued to an employer because of a rescue activity undertaken by an employee of that employer with respect to an individual in imminent danger unless:

(1)(i) Such employee is designated or assigned by the employer to have responsibility to perform or assist in rescue operations, and

(ii) The employer fails to provide protection of the safety and health of such employee, including failing to provide appropriate training and rescue equipment; or

(2)(i) Such employee is directed by the employer to perform rescue activities in the course of carrying out the employee's job duties, and

(ii) The employer fails to provide protection of the safety and health of such employee, including failing to provide appropriate training and rescue equipment; or

(3)(i) Such employee is employed in a workplace that requires the employee to carry out duties that are directly related to a workplace operation where the likelihood of life-threatening accidents is foreseeable, such as a workplace operation where employees are located in confined spaces or trenches, handle hazardous waste, respond to emergency situations, perform excavations, or perform construction over water; and

(ii) Such employee has not been designated or assigned to perform or assist in rescue operations and voluntarily elects to rescue such an individual; and

(iii) The employer has failed to instruct employees not designated or assigned to perform or assist in rescue operations of the arrangements for rescue, not to attempt rescue, and of the hazards of attempting rescue without adequate training or equipment.

(4) For purposes of this policy, the term "imminent danger" means the existence of any condition or practice that could reasonably be expected to cause death or serious physical harm before such condition or practice can be abated.

[36 FR 17850, Sept. 4, 1971, as amended at 59 FR 66613, Dec. 27, 1994]

§ 1903.14a Petitions for modification of abatement date.

(a) An employer may file a petition for modification of abatement date when he has made a good faith effort to comply with the abatement requirements of a citation, but such abatement has not been completed because of factors beyond his reasonable control.

(b) A petition for modification of abatement date shall be in writing and shall include the following information:

(1) All steps taken by the employer, and the dates of such action, in an effort to achieve compliance during the prescribed abatement period.

(2) The specific additional abatement time necessary in order to achieve compliance.

(3) The reasons such additional time is necessary, including the unavailability of professional or technical personnel or of materials and equipment, or because necessary construction or alteration of facilities cannot be completed by the original abatement date.

(4) All available interim steps being taken to safeguard the employees against the cited hazard during the abatement period.

(5) A certification that a copy of the petition has been posted and, if appropriate, served on the authorized representative of affected employees, in accordance with paragraph (c)(1) of this section and a certification of the date upon which such posting and service was made.

(c) A petition for modification of abatement date shall be filed with the Area Director of the United States Department of Labor who issued the citation no later than the close of the next working day following the date on which abatement was originally required. A later-filed petition shall be accompanied by the employer's statement of exceptional circumstances explaining the delay.

(1) A copy of such petition shall be posted in a conspicuous place where all affected employees will have notice thereof or near such location where the violation occurred. The petition shall remain posted for a period of ten (10) working days. Where affected employees are represented by an authorized representative, said representative shall be served with a copy of such petition.

(2) Affected employees or their representatives may file an objection in writing to such petition with the aforesaid Area Director. Failure to file such objection within ten (10) working days of the date of posting of such petition or of service upon an authorized representative shall constitute a waiver of any further right to object to said petition.

(3) The Secretary or his duly authorized agent shall have the authority to approve any petition for modification of abatement date filed pursuant to paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section. Such uncontested petitions shall become final orders pursuant to sections 10 (a) and (c) of the Act.

(4) The Secretary or his authorized representative shall not exercise his approval power until the expiration of fifteen (15) working days from the date the petition was posted or served pursuant to paragraphs (c) (1) and (2) of this section by the employer.

(d) Where any petition is objected to by the Secretary or affected employees, the petition, citation, and any objections shall be forwarded to the Commission within three (3) working days after the expiration of the fifteen (15) day period set out in paragraph (c)(4) of this section.

[40 FR 6334, Feb. 11, 1975; 40 FR 11351, Mar. 11, 1975]

§ 1903.15 Proposed penalties.

(a) After, or concurrent with, the issuance of a citation, and within a reasonable time after the termination of the inspection, the Area Director shall notify the employer by certified mail or by personal service by the Compliance Safety and Health Officer of the proposed penalty in accordance with paragraph (d) of this section, or that no penalty is being proposed. Any notice of proposed penalty shall state that the proposed penalty shall be deemed to be the final order of the Review Commission and not subject to review by any court or agency unless, within 15 working days from the date of receipt of such notice, the employer notifies the Area Director in writing that he intends to contest the citation or the notification of proposed penalty before the Review Commission.

(b) The Area Director shall determine the amount of any proposed penalty, giving due consideration to the appropriateness of the penalty with respect to the size of the business of the employer being charged, the gravity of the violation, the good faith of the employer, and the history of previous violations, in accordance with the provisions of section 17 of the Act and paragraph (d) of this section.

(c) Appropriate penalties may be proposed with respect to an alleged violation even though after being informed of such alleged violation by the Compliance Safety and Health Officer, the employer immediately abates, or initiates steps to abate, such alleged violation. Penalties shall not be proposed for de minimis violations which have no direct or immediate relationship to safety or health.

(d) Adjusted civil monetary penalties. The adjusted civil penalties for penalties proposed after January 15, 2025 are as follows:

(1) Willful violation. The penalty per willful violation under section 17(a) of the Act, 29 U.S.C. 666(a), shall not be less than $11,823 and shall not exceed $165,514.

(2) Repeated violation. The penalty per repeated violation under section 17(a) of the Act, 29 U.S.C. 666(a), shall not exceed $165,514.

(3) Serious violation. The penalty for a serious violation under section 17(b) of the Act, 29 U.S.C. 666(b), shall not exceed $16,550.

(4) Other-than-serious violation. The penalty for an other-than-serious violation under section 17(c) of the Act, 29 U.S.C. 666(c), shall not exceed $16,550.

(5) Failure to correct violation. The penalty for a failure to correct a violation under section 17(d) of the

Act, 29 U.S.C. 666(d), shall not exceed $16,550 per day.

(6) Posting requirement violation. The penalty for a posting requirement violation under section 17(i) of the Act, 29 U.S.C. 666(i), shall not exceed $16,550.

[36 FR 17850, Sept. 4, 1971, as amended at 81 FR 43453, July 1, 2016; 82 FR 5382, Jan. 18, 2017; 83 FR 14, Jan. 2, 2018; 84 FR 219, Jan. 23, 2019; 85 FR 2298, Jan. 15, 2020; 86 FR 2969, Jan. 14, 2021; 87 FR 2336, Jan. 14, 2022; 88 FR 2217, Jan. 13, 2023; 89 FR 1817, Jan. 11, 2024; 90 FR 1861, Jan. 10, 2025]