

TABLE 1 TO § 2634.703—Continued

Date of violation	Penalty
Violation occurring after Nov. 2, 2015	20,489

(b) This remedy shall be in addition to any other remedy available under statutory or common law.

PART 2636—LIMITATIONS ON OUTSIDE EARNED INCOME, EMPLOYMENT AND AFFILIATIONS FOR CERTAIN NONCAREER EMPLOYEES

■ 5. The authority citation for part 2636 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 5 U.S.C. App. (Ethics in Government Act of 1978); Pub. L. 101–410, 104 Stat. 890, 28 U.S.C. 2461 note (Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990), as amended by Sec. 31001, Pub. L. 104–134, 110 Stat. 1321 (Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996) and Sec. 701, Pub. L. 114–74 (Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act Improvements Act of 2015); E.O. 12674, 54 FR 15159, 3 CFR, 1989 Comp., p. 215, as modified by E.O. 12731, 55 FR 42547, 3 CFR, 1990 Comp., p. 306.

■ 6. Section 2636.104 is amended by revising paragraph (a) to read as follows:

§ 2636.104 Civil, disciplinary and other action.

(a) *Civil action.* Except when the employee engages in conduct in good faith reliance upon an advisory opinion issued under § 2636.103, an employee who engages in any conduct in violation of the prohibitions, limitations and restrictions contained in this part may be subject to civil action under 5 U.S.C. app. 504(a) and a civil monetary penalty of not more than the amounts set in Table 1 to this section, as adjusted in accordance with the inflation adjustment procedures prescribed in the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990, as amended, or the amount of the compensation the individual received for the prohibited conduct, whichever is greater.

TABLE 1 TO § 2636.104

Date of violation	Penalty
Violation occurring between Sept. 29, 1999 and Nov. 2, 2015	\$11,000
Violation occurring after Nov. 2, 2015	20,489

* * * * *
[FR Doc. 2020–00479 Filed 1–14–20; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6345–03–P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

10 CFR Parts 2 and 13

[NRC–2018–0048]

RIN 3150–AK11

Adjustment of Civil Penalties for Inflation for Fiscal Year 2020

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is amending its regulations to adjust the maximum civil monetary penalties it can assess under statutes enforced by the agency. These changes are mandated by the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990, as amended by the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act Improvements Act of 2015. The NRC is amending its regulations to adjust the maximum civil monetary penalty for a violation of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, or any regulation or order issued under the Atomic Energy Act from \$298,211 to \$303,471 per violation, per day. Additionally, the NRC is amending provisions concerning program fraud civil penalties by adjusting the maximum civil monetary penalty under the Program Fraud Civil Remedies Act from \$11,463 to \$11,665 for each false claim or statement.

DATES: This final rule is effective on January 15, 2020.

ADDRESSES: Please refer to Docket ID NRC–2018–0048 when contacting the NRC about the availability of information for this action. You may obtain publicly-available information related to this action by any of the following methods:

- *Federal Rulemaking Website:* Go to <https://www.regulations.gov> and search for Docket ID NRC–2018–0048. Address questions about NRC dockets to Carol Gallagher; telephone: 301–415–3463; email: Carol.Gallagher@nrc.gov. For technical questions, contact the individual listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section of this document.

- *NRC’s Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS):* You may obtain publicly-available documents online in the ADAMS Public Documents collection at <https://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. To begin the search, select “Begin Web-based ADAMS Search.” For problems with ADAMS, please contact the NRC’s Public Document Room (PDR) reference staff at 1–800–397–4209, 301–415–4737, or by email to pdr.resource@nrc.gov.

nrc.gov. The ADAMS accession number for each document referenced (if it is available in ADAMS) is provided the first time that it is mentioned in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section.

- *NRC’s PDR:* You may examine and purchase copies of public documents at the NRC’s PDR, Room O1–F21, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland 20852.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Eric Michel, Office of the General Counsel, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555–0001, telephone: 301–415–0932; email: Eric.Michel2@nrc.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Table of Contents:

- I. Background
- II. Discussion
- III. Rulemaking Procedure
- IV. Section-by-Section Analysis
- V. Regulatory Analysis
- VI. Regulatory Flexibility Act
- VII. Backfitting and Issue Finality
- VIII. Plain Writing
- IX. National Environmental Policy Act
- X. Paperwork Reduction Act
- XI. Congressional Review Act

I. Background

Congress passed the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990 (FCPIAA) in 1990 to allow for regular adjustment for inflation of civil monetary penalties (CMPs), maintain the deterrent effect of such penalties and promote compliance with the law, and improve the collection of CMPs by the Federal Government (Pub. L. 101–410, 104 Stat. 890; 28 U.S.C. 2461 note). Pursuant to this authority, and as amended by the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104–34, 110 Stat. 1321–373), the NRC increased via rulemaking the CMP amounts for violations of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (AEA) (codified at § 2.205 of title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR)) and Program Fraud Civil Remedies Act (codified at § 13.3) on four occasions between 1996 and 2008.¹

On November 2, 2015, Congress amended the FCPIAA through the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation

¹ Adjustment of Civil Penalties for Inflation, (73 FR 54671; Sept. 23, 2008); Adjustment of Civil Penalties for Inflation, (69 FR 62393; Oct. 26, 2004); Adjustment of Civil Penalties for Inflation; Miscellaneous Administrative Changes, (65 FR 59270; Oct. 4, 2000); Adjustment of Civil Monetary Penalties for Inflation, (61 FR 53554; Oct. 11, 1996). An adjustment was not performed in 2012 because the FCPIAA at the time required agencies to round their CMP amounts to the nearest multiple of \$1,000 or \$10,000, depending on the size of the CMP amount, and the 2012 adjustments based on the statutory formula were small enough that no adjustment resulted.

Adjustment Act Improvements Act of 2015 (2015 Improvements Act) (Sec. 701, Pub. L. 114–74, 129 Stat. 599). The 2015 Improvements Act required that the head of each agency perform an initial “catch-up” adjustment via rulemaking, adjusting the CMPs enforced by that agency according to the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) between the month of October 2015 and the month of October of the calendar year when the CMP amount was last established by Congress. The NRC performed this catch-up rulemaking on July 1, 2016 (81 FR 43019).

The 2015 Improvements Act also requires that the head of each agency continue to adjust CMP amounts, rounded to the nearest dollar, on an annual basis. Specifically, each CMP is to be adjusted based on the percentage change between the CPI for the previous month of October, and the CPI for the month of October in the year preceding that. The NRC most recently adjusted its civil penalties for inflation according to this statutory formula on February 7, 2019 (84 FR 2433). This year’s adjustment is based on the percentage change between the CPI for October 2018 and October 2019.

II. Discussion

Section 234 of the AEA limits civil penalties for violations of the AEA to \$100,000 per day, per violation (42 U.S.C. 2282). However, as discussed in Section I, “Background,” of this document, the NRC has increased this amount several times since 1996 per the FCPIAA, as amended. Using the formula in the 2015 Improvements Act, the \$298,211 amount last established in February 2019 will increase by 1.764 percent, resulting in a new CMP amount of \$303,471. This is based on the percentage change between the October 2018 CPI (252.885) and the October 2019 CPI (257.346). Therefore, the NRC is amending § 2.205 to reflect a new maximum CMP under the AEA in the amount of \$303,471 per day, per violation. This represents an increase of \$5,260.

Monetary penalties under the Program Fraud Civil Remedies Act were established in 1986 at \$5,000 per claim (Pub. L. 99–509, 100 Stat. 1938; 31 U.S.C. 3802). The NRC also has adjusted this amount (currently set at \$11,463) multiple times pursuant to the FCPIAA, as amended, since 1996. Using the formula in the 2015 Improvements Act, the \$11,463 amount last established in February 2019 will also increase by 1.764 percent, resulting in a new CMP amount of \$11,665. Therefore, the NRC is amending § 13.3 to reflect a new

maximum CMP amount of \$11,665 per claim or statement. This represents an increase of \$202.

As permitted by the 2015 Improvements Act, the NRC may apply these increased CMP amounts to any penalties assessed by the agency after the effective date of this rulemaking (January 15, 2020), regardless of whether the associated violation occurred before or after this date (Pub. L. 114–74, 129 Stat. 600; 28 U.S.C. 2461 note). The NRC assesses civil penalty amounts for violations of the AEA based on the class of licensee and severity of the violation, in accordance with the NRC Enforcement Policy. A corresponding update to the NRC Enforcement Policy is being published today in the Rules section of the **Federal Register** to reflect the updated CMP amount in § 2.205 (Docket ID NRC–2019–0242).

III. Rulemaking Procedure

The 2015 Improvements Act expressly exempts this final rule from the notice and comment requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act, by directing agencies to adjust CMPs for inflation “notwithstanding section 553 of title 5, United States Code” (Pub. L. 114–74, 129 Stat. 599; 28 U.S.C. 2461 note). As such, this final rule is being issued without prior public notice or opportunity for public comment, with an effective date of January 15, 2020.

IV. Section-by-Section Analysis

§ 2.205 Civil Penalties

This final rule revises paragraph (j) by replacing “\$298,211” with “\$303,471”.

§ 13.3 Basis for Civil Penalties and Assessments

This final rule revises paragraphs (a)(1)(iv) and (b)(1)(ii) by replacing “\$11,463” with “\$11,665”.

V. Regulatory Analysis

This final rule adjusts for inflation the maximum CMPs the NRC may assess under the AEA and under the Program Fraud Civil Remedies Act of 1986. The formula for determining the amount of the adjustment is mandated by Congress in the FCPIAA, as amended by the 2015 Improvements Act (codified at 28 U.S.C. 2461 note). Congress passed this legislation on the basis of its findings that the power to impose monetary civil penalties is important to deterring violations of Federal law and furthering the policy goals of Federal laws and regulations. Congress has also found that inflation diminishes the impact of these penalties and their effect. The principal purposes of this legislation are to provide for adjustment of civil

monetary penalties for inflation, maintain the deterrent effect of civil monetary penalties, and promote compliance with the law. Therefore, these are the anticipated impacts of this rulemaking. Direct monetary impacts fall only upon licensees or other persons subjected to NRC enforcement for violations of the AEA and regulations and orders issued under the AEA (§ 2.205), or those licensees or persons subjected to liability pursuant to the provisions of the Program Fraud Civil Remedies Act of 1986 (31 U.S.C. 3801–3812) and the NRC’s implementing regulations (10 CFR part 13).

VI. Regulatory Flexibility Act

The Regulatory Flexibility Act does not apply to regulations for which a Federal agency is not required by law, including the rulemaking provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act, 5 U.S.C. 553(b), to publish a general notice of proposed rulemaking (5 U.S.C. 604). As discussed in this notice under Section III., “Rulemaking Procedure,” the NRC has determined that this final rule is exempt from the requirements of 5 U.S.C. 553(b) and notice and comment need not be provided. Accordingly, the NRC also determines that the requirements of the Regulatory Flexibility Act do not apply to this final rule.

VII. Backfit and Issue Finality

The NRC has not prepared a backfit analysis for this final rule. This final rule does not involve any provision that would impose a backfit, nor is it inconsistent with any issue finality provision, as those terms are defined in 10 CFR chapter I. As mandated by Congress, this final rule increases CMP amounts for violations of already-existing NRC regulations and requirements. This final rule does not modify any licensee systems, structures, components, designs, approvals, or procedures required for the construction or operation of any facility.

VIII. Plain Writing

The Plain Writing Act of 2010 (Pub. L. 111–274) requires Federal agencies to write documents in a clear, concise, and well-organized manner. The NRC has written this document to be consistent with the Plain Writing Act as well as the Presidential Memorandum, “Plain Language in Government Writing,” published June 10, 1998 (63 FR 31883).

IX. National Environmental Policy Act

The NRC has determined that this final rule is the type of action described as a categorical exclusion in 10 CFR 51.22(c)(1). Therefore, neither an

environmental impact statement nor an environmental assessment has been prepared for this final rule.

X. Paperwork Reduction Act

This final rule does not contain a collection of information as defined in the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*) and, therefore, is not subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

XI. Congressional Review Act

This final rule is a rule as defined in the Congressional Review Act (5 U.S.C. 801–808). However, the Office of Management and Budget has not found it to be a major rule as defined in the Congressional Review Act.

List of Subjects

10 CFR Part 2

Administrative practice and procedure, Antitrust, Byproduct material, Classified information, Confidential business information, Environmental protection, Freedom of information, Hazardous waste, Nuclear energy, Nuclear materials, Nuclear power plants and reactors, Penalties, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Sex discrimination, Source material, Special nuclear material, Waste treatment and disposal.

10 CFR Part 13

Administrative practice and procedure, Claims, Fraud, Organization and function (Government agencies), Penalties.

For the reasons set out in the preamble and under the authority of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended; the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974, as amended; 28 U.S.C. 2461 note; and 5 U.S.C. 552 and 553, the NRC is adopting the following amendments to 10 CFR parts 2 and 13:

PART 2—AGENCY RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

- 1. The authority citation for part 2 is revised to read as follows:

Authority: Atomic Energy Act of 1954, secs. 29, 53, 62, 63, 81, 102, 103, 104, 105, 161, 181, 182, 183, 184, 186, 189, 191, 234 (42 U.S.C. 2039, 2073, 2092, 2093, 2111, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2201, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2236, 2239, 2241, 2282); Energy Reorganization Act of 1974, secs. 201, 206 (42 U.S.C. 5841, 5846); Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982, secs. 114(f), 134, 135, 141 (42 U.S.C. 10134(f), 10154, 10155, 10161); Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 552, 553, 554, 557, 558); National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332); 44 U.S.C. 3504 note.

Section 2.205(j) also issued under 28 U.S.C. 2461 note.

§ 2.205 [Amended]

- 2. In § 2.205(j), remove the amount “\$298,211” and add in its place the amount “\$303,471”.

PART 13—PROGRAM FRAUD CIVIL REMEDIES

- 3. The authority citation for part 13 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 31 U.S.C. 3801 through 3812; 44 U.S.C. 3504 note.

Section 13.3 also issued under 28 U.S.C. 2461 note.

Section 13.13 also issued under 31 U.S.C. 3730.

§ 13.3 [Amended]

- 4. In § 13.3(a)(1)(iv) and (b)(1)(ii), remove the amount “\$11,463” and add in its place the amount “\$11,665”.

Dated in Rockville, Maryland, this 31st day of December 2019.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Margaret M. Doane,

Executive Director for Operations.

[FR Doc. 2020–00304 Filed 1–14–20; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590–01–P

FARM CREDIT SYSTEM INSURANCE CORPORATION

12 CFR Part 1411

RIN 3055–AA16

Rules of Practice and Procedure; Adjusting Civil Money Penalties for Inflation

AGENCY: Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This rule implements inflation adjustments to civil money penalties (CMPs) that the Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation (FCSIC) may impose under the Farm Credit Act of 1971, as amended. These adjustments are required by 2015 amendments to the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990.

DATES:

Effective date: This regulation is effective on January 15, 2020.

Applicability date: The adjusted amounts of civil money penalties in this rule are applicable to penalties assessed on or after January 15, 2019, for conduct occurring on or after November 2, 2015.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lynn M. Powalski, General Counsel, Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation, 1501 Farm Credit Drive, McLean, Virginia 22102, (703) 883–4380, TTY (703) 883–4390.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

The Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act Improvements Act of 2015 (the 2015 Act) amended the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990 (the Inflation Adjustment Act)¹ to improve the effectiveness of civil monetary penalties and to maintain their deterrent effect. The Inflation Adjustment Act provides for the regular evaluation of CMPs and requires FCSIC, and every other Federal agency with authority to impose CMPs, to ensure that CMPs continue to maintain their deterrent values.²

FCSIC must enact regulations that annually adjust its CMPs pursuant to the inflation adjustment formula of the amended Inflation Adjustment Act and rounded using a method prescribed by the Inflation Adjustment Act. The new amounts are applicable to penalties assessed on or after January 15, 2019, for conduct occurring on or after November 2, 2015. Agencies do not have discretion in choosing whether to adjust a CMP, by how much to adjust a CMP, or the methods used to determine the adjustment.

II. CMPs Imposed Pursuant to Section 5.65 of the Farm Credit Act

First, section 5.65(c) of the Farm Credit Act, as amended (Act), provides that any insured Farm Credit System bank that willfully fails or refuses to file any certified statement or pay any required premium shall be subject to a penalty of not more than \$100 for each day that such violations continue, which penalty FCSIC may recover for its use.³ Second, section 5.65(d) of the Act provides that, except with the prior written consent of the Farm Credit Administration, it shall be unlawful for any person convicted of any criminal offense involving dishonesty or a breach of trust to serve as a director, officer, or employee of any System institution.⁴ For each willful violation of section 5.65(d), the institution involved shall be subject to a penalty of not more than

¹ Public Law 101–410, 104 Stat. 890 (Oct. 5, 1990), as amended by Public Law 104–134, title III, sec. 31001(s)(1), 110 Stat. 1321–373 (Apr. 26, 1996); Public Law 105–362, title XIII, sec. 1301(a), 112 Stat. 3293 (Nov. 10, 1998); Public Law 114–74, title VII, sec. 701(b), 129 Stat. 599 (Nov. 2, 2015), codified at 28 U.S.C. 2461 note.

² Under the amended Inflation Adjustment Act, a CMP is defined as any penalty, fine, or other sanction that: (1) Either is for a specific monetary amount as provided by Federal law or has a maximum amount provided for by Federal law; (2) is assessed or enforced by an agency pursuant to Federal law; and (3) is assessed or enforced pursuant to an administrative proceeding or a civil action in the Federal courts. All three requirements must be met for a fine to be considered a CMP.

³ 12 U.S.C. 2277a–14(c).

⁴ 12 U.S.C. 2277a–14(d).