

whether to reduce or not assess penalties against a specific small entity, the following considerations will apply:

(1) Except as provided in paragraph (a)(3) of this section, penalty reduction will not be available for any small entity if:

(i) The small entity was subject previously to an enforcement action;

(ii) Any of the small entity's violations involved willful or criminal conduct; or

(iii) The small entity did not make a good faith effort to comply with the law.

(2) In considering whether the Commission will reduce or refrain from assessing a civil money penalty, the Commission may consider:

(i) The egregiousness of the violations;

(ii) The isolated or repeated nature of the violations;

(iii) The violator's state of mind when committing the violations;

(iv) The violator's history (if any) of legal or regulatory violations;

(v) The extent to which the violator cooperated during the investigation;

(vi) Whether the violator has engaged in subsequent remedial efforts to mitigate the effects of the violation and to prevent future violations;

(vii) The degree to which a penalty will deter the violator or others from committing future violations; and

(viii) Any other relevant fact.

(3) The Commission also may consider whether to reduce or not assess a civil money penalty against a small entity, including a small entity otherwise excluded from this policy under paragraphs (a)(1) (i)-(iii) of this section, if the small entity can demonstrate to the Commission's satisfaction that it is financially unable to pay the penalty, immediately or over a reasonable period of time, in whole or in part.

(4) For purposes of this policy, an entity qualifies as "small" if it is a small business or small organization as defined by Commission rules adopted for the purpose of compliance with the Regulatory Flexibility Act.¹ An entity

¹Pursuant to the Reg. Flex. Act, 5 U.S.C. § 601(3), the Commission has adopted appropriate definitions of "small business" for purposes of the Reg. Flex. Act. See 17 CFR 270.0-10, 275.0-7, 240.0-10, 230.157, 250.110, and

not included in these definitions will be considered "small" for purposes of this policy if it meets the total asset amount that applies to issuers as set forth in § 230.157a of this chapter.²

(b) This policy does not create a right or remedy for any person. This policy shall not apply to any remedy that may be sought by the Commission other than civil money penalties, whether or not such other remedy may be characterized as penal or remedial.

[62 FR 16079, Apr. 4, 1997]

PART 203—RULES RELATING TO INVESTIGATIONS

Subpart A—In General

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AUTHORITY: 15 U.S.C 77s, 78w, 79t, 77sss, 80a-37, 80b-11, unless otherwise noted.

260.0-7. The Commission recently proposed amendments to certain of these definitions. *Definitions of "Small Business" or "Small Organization" Under the Investment Company Act of 1940, the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, and the Securities Act of 1933*, Securities Act Rel. No. 7383, 62 FR 4106 (Jan. 28, 1997). The Commission extended the comment period for the proposed amendments to April 30, 1997, 62 FR 13356 (Mar. 20, 1997). Based on an analysis of the language and legislative history of the Reg. Flex. Act, Congress does not appear to have intended that Act to apply to natural persons (as opposed to individual proprietorships) or to foreign entities. The Commission understands that staff at the Small Business Administration have taken the same position.

²At present, this threshold is \$5 million. Thus, non-regulated entities, such as general partnerships, privately held corporations or professional service organizations, with assets of \$5 million or less may qualify for penalty-reduction.

§ 203.1

SOURCE: 29 FR 3620, Mar. 21, 1964, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—In General

§ 203.1 Application of the rules of this part.

The rules of this part apply only to investigations conducted by the Commission. They do not apply to adjudicative or rulemaking proceedings.

§ 203.2 Information obtained in investigations and examinations.

Information or documents obtained by the Commission in the course of any investigation or examination, unless made a matter of public record, shall be deemed non-public, but the Commission approves the practice whereby officials of the Divisions of Enforcement, Corporation Finance, Market Regulation and Investment Management and the Office of International Affairs at the level of Assistant Director or higher, and officials in Regional Offices at the level of Assistant Regional Director or District Administrator or higher, may engage in and may authorize members of the Commission's staff to engage in discussions with persons identified in § 240.24c-1(b) of this chapter concerning information obtained in individual investigations or examinations, including formal investigations conducted pursuant to Commission order.

[58 FR 52419, Oct. 8, 1993, as amended at 59 FR 5945, Feb. 9, 1994]

§ 203.3 Suspension and disbarment.

The provisions of § 201.102(e) of this chapter (Rule 102(e) of the Commission's rules of practice) are hereby made specifically applicable to all investigations.

[29 FR 3620, Mar. 21, 1964, as amended at 60 FR 32823, June 23, 1995]

Subpart B—Formal Investigative Proceedings

§ 203.4 Applicability of §§ 203.4 through 203.8.

(a) Sections 203.4 through 203.8 shall be applicable to a witness who is sworn in a proceeding pursuant to a Commission order for investigation or exam-

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ination, such proceeding being hereinafter referred to as a *formal investigative proceeding*.

(b) Formal investigative proceedings may be held before the Commission, before one or more of its members, or before any officer designated by it for the purpose of taking testimony of witnesses and received other evidence. The term *officer conducting the investigation* shall mean any of the foregoing.

§ 203.5 Non-public formal investigative proceedings.

Unless otherwise ordered by the Commission, all formal investigative proceedings shall be non-public.

§ 203.6 Transcripts.

Transcripts, if any, of formal investigative proceedings shall be recorded solely by the official reporter, or by any other person or means designated by the officer conducting the investigation. A person who has submitted documentary evidence or testimony in a formal investigative proceeding shall be entitled, upon written request, to procure a copy of his documentary evidence or a transcript of his testimony on payment of the appropriate fees: *Provided, however,* That in a nonpublic formal investigative proceeding the Commission may for good cause deny such request. In any event, any witness, upon proper identification, shall have the right to inspect the official transcript of the witness' own testimony.

(15 U.S.C. 78d-1)

[37 FR 25166, Nov. 28, 1972]

§ 203.7 Rights of witnesses.

(a) Any person who is compelled or requested to furnish documentary evidence or testimony at a formal investigative proceeding shall, upon request, be shown the Commission's order of investigation. Copies of formal orders of investigation shall not be furnished, for their retention, to such persons requesting the same except with the express approval of officials in the Regional or District Offices at the level of Assistant Regional Director or District Administrator or higher, or officials in the Division or Divisions conducting or supervising the investigation at the

level of Assistant Director or higher. Such approval shall not be given unless the person granting such approval, in his or her discretion, is satisfied that there exist reasons consistent both with the protection of privacy of persons involved in the investigation and with the unimpeded conduct of the investigation.

(b) Any person compelled to appear, or who appears by request or permission of the Commission, in person at a formal investigative proceeding may be accompanied, represented and advised by counsel, as defined in §201.101(a) of this chapter (Rule 101(a) of the Commission's rules of practice): *Provided*, however, That all witnesses shall be sequestered, and unless permitted in the discretion of the officer conducting the investigation no witness or the counsel accompanying any such witness shall be permitted to be present during the examination of any other witness called in such proceeding.

(c) The right to be accompanied, represented and advised by counsel shall mean the right of a person testifying to have an attorney present with him during any formal investigative proceeding and to have this attorney (1) advise such person before, during and after the conclusion of such examination, (2) question such person briefly at the conclusion of the examination to clarify any of the answers such person has given, and (3) make summary notes during such examination solely for the use of such person.

(d) Unless otherwise ordered by the Commission, in any public formal investigative proceeding, if the record shall contain implications of wrongdoing by any person, such person shall have the right to appear on the record; and in addition to the rights afforded other witnesses hereby, he shall have a reasonable opportunity of cross-examination and production of rebuttal testimony or documentary evidence. *Reasonable* shall mean permitting persons as full an opportunity to assert their position as may be granted consistent with administrative efficiency and with avoidance of undue delay. The determination of reasonableness in each instance shall be made in the discretion of the officer conducting the investigation.

(e) The officer conducting the investigation may report to the Commission any instances where any witness or counsel has been guilty of dilatory, obstructive or contumacious conduct during the course of an investigation or any other instance of violation of these rules. The Commission will thereupon take such further action as the circumstances may warrant, including suspension or disbarment of counsel from further appearance or practice before it, in accordance with §201.2(e) of this chapter (Rule 2(e) of the Commission's rules of practice), or exclusion from further participation in the particular investigation.

[29 FR 3620, Mar. 21, 1964, as amended at 52 FR 12148, Apr. 15, 1987; 59 FR 5945, Feb. 9, 1994; 60 FR 32823, June 23, 1995]

§203.8 Service of subpoenas.

Service of subpoenas issued in formal investigative proceedings shall be effected in the manner prescribed by Rule 232(c) of the Commission's Rules of Practice, §201.232(c) of this chapter.

[29 FR 3620, Mar. 21, 1964, as amended at 60 FR 32823, June 23, 1995]

PART 204—RULES RELATING TO DEBT COLLECTION

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