

Small Entity Compliance Guides (FY 2025)

Report to Congress

January 30, 2026

U.S. Coast Guard

AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION

Foreword

January 30, 2026



I am pleased to present the following report, "Small Entity Compliance Guides (FY 2025)," as prepared by the U.S. Coast Guard.

The Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 directs the submission of an annual report that provides an overview of all Small Entity Compliance Guides released by the Coast Guard.

Pursuant to Congressional requirements, this report is provided to the following members of Congress:

Senator Joni Ernst
Chairman, Senate Committee on
Small Business and Entrepreneurship

Senator Edward J. Markey
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on
Small Business and Entrepreneurship

Representative Roger Williams
Chairwoman, House Committee on
Small Business

Representative Nydia Velázquez
Ranking Member, House Committee on
Small Business

Senator Ted Cruz
Chair, Senate Committee on
Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Senator Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on
Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Representative Sam Graves
Chairman, House Committee on
Transportation and Infrastructure

Representative Rick Larsen
Ranking Member, House Committee on
Transportation and Infrastructure.

Please direct report inquiries to my Senate Liaison Office at (202) 224-2913 or House Liaison Office at (202) 225-4775.

Sincerely,

Kevin E. Lunday
Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard
Commandant

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I. Legislative Language

Through this report, the Coast Guard responds to language set forth in Section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104-121), as amended, which states:

TITLE II--SMALL BUSINESS REGULATORY FAIRNESS

SEC. 212. COMPLIANCE GUIDES.

(a) COMPLIANCE GUIDE.--

(1) IN GENERAL.--For each rule or group of related rules for which an agency is required to prepare a final regulatory flexibility analysis under section 605(b) of title 5, United States Code, the agency shall publish 1 or more guides to assist small entities in complying with the rule and shall entitle such publications 'small entity compliance guides'.

(2) PUBLICATION OF GUIDES.--The publication of each guide under this subsection shall include--

(A) the posting of the guide in an easily identified location on the website of the agency; and

(B) distribution of the guide to known industry contacts, such as small entities, associations, or industry leaders affected by the rule.

(3) PUBLICATION DATE.--An agency shall publish each guide (including the posting and distribution of the guide as described under paragraph (2))--

(A) on the same date as the date of publication of the final rule (or as soon as possible after that date); and

(B) not later than the date on which the requirements of that rule become effective.

(4) COMPLIANCE ACTIONS.--

(A) IN GENERAL.--Each guide shall explain the actions a small entity is required to take to comply with a rule.

(B) EXPLANATION.--The explanation under subparagraph (A)--

(i) shall include a description of actions needed to meet the requirements of a rule, to enable a small entity to know when such requirements are met; and

(ii) if determined appropriate by the agency, may include a description of possible procedures, such as conducting tests that may assist a small entity in meeting such requirements, except that, compliance with any procedures described pursuant to this section does not establish compliance with the rule, or establish a presumption or inference of such compliance.

(C) PROCEDURES.--Procedures described under subparagraph (B)(ii)--

(i) shall be suggestions to assist small entities; and

(ii) shall not be additional requirements, or diminish requirements, relating to the rule.

(5) AGENCY PREPARATION OF GUIDES.--The agency shall, in its sole discretion, taking into account the subject matter of the rule and the language of relevant statutes, ensure that the guide is written using sufficiently plain language likely to be understood by affected small entities. Agencies may prepare separate guides covering groups or classes of similarly affected small entities and may cooperate with associations of small entities to develop and distribute such guides. An agency may prepare guides and apply this section with respect to a rule or a group of related rules.

(6) REPORTING.--Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007, and annually thereafter, the head of each agency shall submit a report to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate, the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives, and any other committee of relevant jurisdiction describing the status of the agency's compliance with paragraphs (1) through (5).

(b) Comprehensive Source of Information.--Agencies shall cooperate to make available to small entities through comprehensive sources of information, the small entity compliance guides and all other available information on statutory and regulatory requirements affecting small entities.

(c) Limitation on Judicial Review.--An agency's small entity compliance guide shall not be subject to judicial review, except that in any civil or administrative action against a small entity for a violation occurring after the effective date of this section, the content of the small entity compliance guide may be considered as evidence of the reasonableness or appropriateness of any proposed fines, penalties or damages.

II. Report

The Coast Guard published two final rules during fiscal year 2025 that required the preparation of a final regulatory flexibility analysis and a small entity compliance guide.

The final rules and their small entity compliance guides are entitled: "Lifejacket Approval Harmonization" (89 FR 97356)[1]; and "Cybersecurity Regulations for the Marine Transportation System" (90 FR 6298).[2]

Each Coast Guard small entity compliance guide, to include guides for the previous year's final rules, are accessible at https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/Assistant-Commandant-for-Prevention-Policy-CG-5P/Commercial-Regulations-standards-CG-5PS/Small-Entity-Compliance-Guides/.

[1] See Federal Register :: Lifejacket Approval Harmonization.
[2] See Federal Register :: Cybersecurity in the Marine Transportation System.