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(2) If full payment of the amount specified in the settlement agreement is not received by the Office within 30 days after the date of signing, the Office may enforce the agreement or rescind it and proceed according to paragraph (b)(3)(ii) of this section within 30 days from the date of the rescission.

(e) The conference officer may terminate the conference when he determines that the issues cannot be resolved or that the person assessed is not diligently working toward resolution of the issues.

[45 FR 58783, Sept. 4, 1980, as amended at 53 FR 3674, Feb. 8, 1988; 56 FR 10063, Mar. 8, 1991]

§ 723.19 Request for hearing.

(a) The person charged with the violation may contest the proposed penalty or the fact of the violation by submitting a petition and an amount equal to the proposed penalty or, if a conference has been held, the reassessed or affirmed penalty to the Office of Hearings and Appeals (to be held in escrow as provided in paragraph (b) of this section) within 30 days from receipt of the proposed assessment or reassessment or 30 days from the date of service of the conference officer's action, whichever is later. The fact of the violation may not be contested, if it has been decided in a review proceeding commenced under section 525 of the Act and 43 CFR part 4.

(b) The Office of Hearings and Appeals shall transfer all funds submitted under paragraph (a) of this section to the Office, which shall hold them in escrow pending completion of the administrative and judicial review process, at which time it shall disburse them as provided in 30 CFR 723.20.

[45 FR 58783, Sept. 4, 1980, as amended at 56 FR 10063, Mar. 8, 1991]

§ 723.20 Final assessment and payment of penalty.

(a) If the person to whom a notice of violation or cessation order is issued fails to request a hearing as provided in 30 CFR 723.19, the proposed assessment shall become a final order of the Secretary and the penalty assessed shall become due and payable upon expiration of the time allowed to request a hearing.

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(b) If any party requests judicial review of a final order of the Secretary, the proposed penalty shall continue to be held in escrow until completion of the review. Otherwise, subject to paragraph (c) of this section, the escrowed funds shall be transferred to the Office in payment of the penalty, and the escrow shall end.

(c) If the final decision in the administrative and judicial review results in an order or eliminating the proposed penalty assessed under this part, the Office shall within 30 days of receipt of the order refund to the person assessed all or part of the escrowed account, with interest from the date of payment into escrow to the date of the refund at the rate of 6 percent or at the prevailing Department of the Treasury rate, whichever is greater.

(d) If the review results in an order increasing the penalty, the person to whom the notice or order was issued shall pay the difference to the Office within 15 days after the order is mailed to such person.

PART 724—INDIVIDUAL CIVIL PENALTIES

Sec.

724.1 Scope.

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724.18 Payment of penalty.

AUTHORITY: 28 U.S.C. 2461, 30 U.S.C. 1201 *et seq.*, and 31 U.S.C. 3701.

SOURCE: 53 FR 3674, Feb. 8, 1988, unless otherwise noted.

§ 724.1 Scope.

This part covers the assessment of individual civil penalties under section 518(f) of the Act.

§ 724.12 When an individual civil penalty may be assessed.

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, the Office may assess an individual civil penalty against any corporate director, officer or agent of a corporate permittee who knowingly and willfully authorized, ordered or carried out a violation, failure or refusal.

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(b) The Office shall not assess an individual civil penalty in situations resulting from a permit violation by a corporate permittee until a cessation order has been issued by the Office to the corporate permittee for the violation, and the cessation order has remained unabated for 30 days.

§ 724.14 Amount of individual civil penalty.

(a) In determining the amount of an individual civil penalty assessed under § 724.12, the Office shall consider the criteria specified in § 518(a) of the Act, including:

(1) The individual's history of authorizing, ordering or carrying out previous violations, failures or refusals at the particular surface coal mining operation;

(2) The seriousness of the violation, failure or refusal (as indicated by the extent of damage and/or the cost of reclamation), including any irreparable harm to the environment and any hazard to the health or safety of the public; and

(3) The demonstrated good faith of the individual charged in attempting to achieve rapid compliance after notice of the violation, failure or refusal.

(b) The penalty will not exceed \$20,988 for each violation. Each day of a continuing violation may be deemed a separate violation and the Office may assess a separate individual civil penalty for each day the violation, failure or refusal continues, from the date of service of the underlying notice of violation, cessation order or other order incorporated in a final decision issued by the Secretary, until abatement or compliance is achieved.

[53 FR 3674, Feb. 8, 1988, as amended at 62 FR 63276, Nov. 28, 1997; 70 FR 70701, Nov. 22, 2005; 74 FR 34493, July 15, 2009; 79 FR 18447, Apr. 2, 2014; 81 FR 44541, July 8, 2016; 82 FR 9354, Feb. 6, 2017; 83 FR 10616, Mar. 12, 2018; 84 FR 10676, Mar. 22, 2019; 85 FR 20835, Apr. 15, 2020; 86 FR 29514, June 2, 2021; 87 FR 15886, Mar. 21, 2022; 88 FR 24336, Apr. 20, 2023; 89 FR 23911, Apr. 5, 2024; 90 FR 23442, June 3, 2025]

§ 724.17 Procedure for assessment of individual civil penalty.

(a) *Notice.* The Office shall serve on each individual to be assessed an individual civil penalty a notice of proposed individual civil penalty assess-

ment, including a narrative explanation of the reasons for the penalty, the amount to be assessed, and a copy of any underlying notice of violation and cessation order.

(b) *Final order and opportunity for review.* The notice of proposed individual civil penalty assessment shall become a final order of the Secretary 30 days after service upon the individual unless:

(1) The individual files within 30 days of service of the notice of proposed individual civil penalty assessment a petition for review with the Hearings Division, Office of Hearings and Appeals, U.S. Department of the Interior, 801 North Quincy Street, Arlington, Virginia 22203 (Phone: 703-235-3800), in accordance with 43 CFR 4.1300 *et seq.*; or

(2) The Office and the individual or responsible corporate permittee agree within 30 days of service of the notice of proposed individual civil penalty assessment to a schedule or plan for the abatement or correction of the violation, failure or refusal.

(c) *Service.* For purposes of this section, service shall be performed on the individual to be assessed an individual civil penalty, by certified mail, or by any alternative means consistent with the rules governing service of a summons and complaint under rule 4 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. Service shall be complete upon tender of the notice of proposed assessment and included information or of the certified mail and shall not be deemed incomplete because of refusal to accept.

[53 FR 3674, Feb. 8, 1988, as amended at 56 FR 28445, June 20, 1991; 67 FR 5204, Feb. 5, 2002]

§ 724.18 Payment of penalty.

(a) *No abatement or appeal.* If a notice of proposed individual civil penalty assessment becomes a final order in the absence of a petition for review or abatement agreement, the penalty shall be due upon issuance of the final order.

(b) *Appeal.* If an individual named in a notice of proposed individual civil penalty assessment files a petition for review in accordance with 43 CFR 4.1300 *et seq.*, the penalty shall be due upon issuance of a final administrative order affirming, increasing or decreasing the proposed penalty.

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(c) *Abatement agreement.* Where the Office and the corporate permittee or individual have agreed in writing on a plan for the abatement of or compliance with the unabated order, an individual named in a notice of proposed individual civil penalty assessment may postpone payment until receiving either a final order from the Office stating that the penalty is due on the date of such final order, or written notice that abatement or compliance is satisfactory and the penalty has been withdrawn.

(d) *Delinquent payment.* Following the expiration of 30 days after the issuance of a final order assessing an individual civil penalty, any delinquent penalty shall be subject to interest at the rate established by the U.S. Department of the Treasury for late charges on late payments to the Federal Government. The Treasury current value of funds rate is published by the Fiscal Service in the notices section of the FEDERAL REGISTER and on Treasury's Web site. Interest on unpaid penalties will run from the date payment first was due until the date of payment. Failure to pay overdue penalties may result in one or more of the actions specified in § 870.23(a) through (f) of this chapter. Delinquent penalties are subject to late payment penalties specified in § 870.21(c) of this chapter and processing and handling charges specified in § 870.21(d) of this chapter.

[53 FR 3674, Feb. 8, 1988, as amended at 73 FR 67630, Nov. 14, 2008]

PART 725—REIMBURSEMENTS TO STATES

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AUTHORITY: Secs. 201, 501, and 502, Pub. L. 95-87, 91 Stat. 445 (30 U.S.C. 1201).

SOURCE: 42 FR 62704, Dec. 13, 1977, unless otherwise noted.

§ 725.1 Scope.

This part sets forth policies and procedures for reimbursements to States for costs of enforcing the initial performance standards set forth in this chapter.

§ 725.2 Objectives.

The objectives of assistance under this part are:

(a) To assist the States in meeting the increased costs of administering the initial performance standards.

(b) To encourage the States to build strong reclamation and enforcement programs.

§ 725.3 Authority.

Section 502(e)(4) of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (30 U.S.C. 1201) authorizes the Secretary to reimburse States for costs of enforcing the performance standards of the initial regulatory program.

§ 725.4 Responsibility.

(a) The Director shall administer the grant program for reimbursement to States for costs of enforcing performance standards during the initial regulatory program.

(b) The Director or his authorized designee shall receive, review and approve grant applications under this part.

[42 FR 62704, Dec. 13, 1977, as amended at 47 FR 38490, Aug. 31, 1982]

§ 725.5 Definitions.

As used in this part, the following terms have the specified meanings:

Agency means the State agency designated by the Governor to receive and administer grants under this part.

Base program means the State program to regulate surface coal mining prior to August 3, 1977.