

FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

12 CFR Part 229

[Regulation CC; Docket No. R-1242]

Availability of Funds and Collection of Checks

AGENCY: Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

ACTION: Final rule; technical amendment.

SUMMARY: The Board of Governors is amending appendix A of Regulation CC to delete the reference to the head office of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston and reassign the Federal Reserve routing symbols currently listed under that office to the Windsor Locks office of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. These amendments will ensure that the information in appendix A accurately describes the actual structure of check processing operations within the Federal Reserve System.

DATES: The final rule will become effective on February 25, 2006.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jack K. Walton II, Associate Director (202/452-2660), or Joseph P. Baressi, Senior Financial Services Analyst (202/452-3959), Division of Reserve Bank Operations and Payment Systems; or Adrienne G. Threatt, Counsel (202/452-3554), Legal Division. For users of Telecommunications Devices for the Deaf (TDD) only, contact 202/263-4869.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Regulation CC establishes the maximum period a depository bank may wait between receiving a deposit and making the deposited funds available for withdrawal.¹ A depository bank generally must provide faster availability for funds deposited by a local check than by a nonlocal check. A check drawn on a bank is considered local if it is payable by or at a bank located in the same Federal Reserve check processing region as the depository bank. A check drawn on a nonbank is considered local if it is payable through a bank located in the same Federal Reserve check processing region as the depository bank. Checks that do not meet the requirements for local checks are considered nonlocal.

Appendix A to Regulation CC contains a routing number guide that assists banks in identifying local and nonlocal banks and thereby determining the maximum permissible hold periods for most deposited checks. The appendix includes a list of each Federal Reserve check processing office and the first four digits of the routing number, known as the Federal Reserve routing symbol, of each bank that is served by that office for check processing purposes. Banks whose Federal Reserve routing symbols are

¹ For purposes of Regulation CC, the term “bank” refers to any depository institution, including commercial banks, savings institutions, and credit unions.

grouped under the same office are in the same check processing region and thus are local to one another.

As explained in detail in the Board's final rule published in the Federal Register on September 28, 2004, the Federal Reserve Banks have decided to restructure their check processing services by reducing further the number of locations at which they process checks.² The Board issues separate final rules amending appendix A for each phase of the restructuring, and the amendments set forth in this notice are such final rules.³

As part of the restructuring process, the head office of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston will cease processing checks on February 25, 2006. As of that date, banks with routing symbols currently assigned to the Boston head office for check processing purposes will be reassigned to the Boston Reserve Bank's Windsor Locks office. As a result of this change, some checks that are drawn on and deposited at banks located in the affected check processing regions and that currently are nonlocal checks will become local checks subject to faster availability schedules.

To assist banks in identifying local and nonlocal banks, the Board accordingly is amending the lists of routing symbols assigned to First District check processing offices to conform to the transfer of operations from the Boston head office to the Windsor Locks office. To coincide with the effective date of the underlying check processing changes, the amendments are effective February 25, 2006. The Board is providing advance notice of these amendments to give affected banks ample time to make any needed processing changes. The advance notice also will enable affected banks to amend their availability schedules and related disclosures, if necessary, and provide their customers with notice of these changes.⁴ The Federal Reserve routing symbols assigned to all other Federal Reserve branches and offices will remain the same at this time. The Board of Governors, however, intends to issue similar notices at least sixty days prior to the elimination of check operations at some other Reserve Bank offices, as described in the September 2004 Federal Register document.

Administrative Procedure Act

The Board has not followed the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 553(b) relating to notice and public participation in connection with the adoption of this final rule. The revisions to the appendix are technical in nature, and the routing symbol revisions are required by the statutory and regulatory definitions of "check-processing region." Because there is

² See 69 FR 57837, September 28, 2004.

³ In addition to the general advance notice of future amendments provided by the Board, and the Board's notices of final amendments, the Reserve Banks are striving to inform affected depository institutions of the exact date of each office transition at least 120 days in advance. The Reserve Banks' communications to affected depository institutions are available at www.frbsservices.org.

⁴ Section 229.18(e) of Regulation CC requires that banks notify account holders who are consumers within 30 days after implementing a change that improves the availability of funds.

no substantive change on which to seek public input, the Board has determined that the § 553(b) notice and comment procedures are unnecessary.

Paperwork Reduction Act

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3506; 5 CFR 1320 Appendix A.1), the Board has reviewed the final rule under authority delegated to the Board by the Office of Management and Budget. This technical amendment to appendix A of Regulation CC will delete the reference to the head office of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston and reassign the routing symbols listed under that office to the Windsor Locks office of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. The depository institutions that are located in the affected check processing regions and that include the routing numbers in their disclosure statements would be required to notify customers of the resulting change in availability under § 229.18(e). However, because all paperwork collection procedures associated with Regulation CC already are in place, the Board anticipates that no additional burden will be imposed as a result of this rulemaking.

List of Subjects in 12 CFR Part 229

Banks, Banking, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

Authority and Issuance

For the reasons set forth in the preamble, the Board is amending 12 CFR part 229 to read as follows:

PART 229-AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS AND COLLECTION OF CHECKS (REGULATION CC)

1. The authority citation for part 229 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 12 U.S.C. 4001–4010, 12 U.S.C. 5001–5018.

2. The First Federal Reserve District routing symbol list in appendix A is revised to read as follows:

APPENDIX A TO PART 229 – ROUTING NUMBER GUIDE TO NEXT-DAY AVAILABILITY CHECKS AND LOCAL CHECKS

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FIRST FEDERAL RESERVE DISTRICT

[Federal Reserve Bank of Boston]

Windsor Locks Office

0110 ¹	2110 ²
0111	2111
0112	2112
0113	2113
0114	2114
0115	2115
0116	2116
0117	2117
0118	2118
0119	2119
0211 ³	2211 ³

* * * * *

By order of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, acting through the Secretary of the Board under delegated authority, December 5, 2005.

Jennifer J. Johnson (signed)
Jennifer J. Johnson
Secretary of the Board.

¹ The first two digits identify the Federal Reserve District. For example, 01 identifies the First Federal Reserve District (Boston), and 12 identifies the Twelfth District (San Francisco).

² Adding 2 to the first digit denotes a thrift institution. For example, 21 identifies a thrift in the First District, and 32 denotes a thrift in the Twelfth District.

³ Banks in Fairfield County, Connecticut, are members of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York and therefore have Second District routing numbers. Their checks, however, are processed by the Windsor Locks office. Thus, checks drawn on banks with 0211 or 2211 routing numbers would not be local checks for Second District depository banks.