

FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

12 CFR Part 229

[Regulation CC; Docket No. R-1221]

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 Birmingham branch office of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta and reassign the Federal Reserve routing symbols currently listed under that office to the head office of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta. 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 March 26, 2005.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jack K. Walton II, Assistant 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 reduce further the number of locations at which they process checks.² This notice sets forth the first in a series of appendix A amendments related to that decision, and the Board will issue separate notices for each phase of the restructuring.³

As part of the restructuring process, the Birmingham branch office of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta will cease processing checks on March 26, 2005. As of that date, banks with routing symbols currently assigned to the Birmingham branch office for check processing purposes will be reassigned to the Atlanta Reserve Bank's head office. As a result of this change, some checks that are drawn on and deposited at banks located in the Birmingham and Atlanta 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 Sixth District check processing offices to conform to the transfer of operations from Birmingham to Atlanta. To coincide with the effective date of the underlying check processing changes, the amendments are effective March 26, 2005. 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 no substantive change on which to seek public input, the Board has determined that the § 553(b) notice and comment procedures are unnecessary.

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.frbsecurities.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.

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 Birmingham branch office of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta and reassign the routing symbols listed under that office to the head office of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta. 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.

12 CFR Chapter II

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 Sixth 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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SIXTH FEDERAL RESERVE DISTRICT

[Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta]

Head Office

0610	2610
0611	2611
0612	2612
0613	2613
0620	2620
0621	2621
0622	2622

Jacksonville Branch

0630	2630
0631	2631
0632	2632
0660	2660
0670	2670

Nashville Branch

0640	2640
0641	2641
0642	2642

New Orleans Branch

0650	2650
0651	2651
0652	2652
0653	2653
0654	2654
0655	2655

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By order of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, acting through the Secretary of the Board under delegated authority, February 7, 2005.

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