



**WEST VIRGINIA SECRETARY OF STATE**

**MAC WARNER**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW DIVISION**

**eFILED**

4/5/2021 10:29:07 AM

Office of West Virginia  
Secretary Of State

**NOTICE OF FINAL FILING AND ADOPTION OF A LEGISLATIVE RULE AUTHORIZED  
BY THE WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

AGENCY: Financial Institutions Division of TITLE-SERIES: 106-21  
RULE TYPE: Legislative Amendment to Existing Rule: No Repeal of existing rule: No  
RULE NAME: Rule Pertaining to the Fintech Regulatory  
Sandbox Program

CITE STATUTORY AUTHORITY: W. Va. Code 31A-8G-3 and 31A-2-4

The above rule has been authorized by the West Virginia Legislature.

Authorization is cited in (house or senate bill number) SB 160

Section 64-7-2 Passed On 3/23/2021 12:00:00 AM

This rule is filed with the Secretary of State. This rule becomes effective on the following date:

May 1, 2021

This rule shall terminate and have no further force or effect from the following date:

August 01, 2026

**BY CHOOSING 'YES', I ATTEST THAT THE PREVIOUS STATEMENT IS TRUE AND CORRECT.**

**Yes**

**Allen R Prunty -- By my signature, I certify that I am the person authorized to file legislative rules,  
in accordance with West Virginia Code §29A-3-11 and §39A-3-2.**

TITLE 106  
LEGISLATIVE RULE  
COMMISSIONER OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

SERIES 21  
RULE PERTAINING TO THE FINTECH REGULATORY SANDBOX PROGRAM

**§106-21-1. General.**

1.1. Scope. -- This rule establishes the general method for implementing West Virginia Code §§31A-8G-1, *et seq.*; it applies to all participants in the Fintech Regulatory Sandbox Program under that statute.

1.2. Authority. -- W.Va. Code §§31A-8G-3 and 31A-2-4.

1.3. Filing Date. -- April 5, 2021.

1.4. Effective Date. -- May 1, 2021.

1.5. Sunset Provision. -- This rule shall terminate and have no further force or effect upon August 1, 2026.

**§106-21-2. Definitions.**

2.1. General Rule. -- Unless a specific definition is provided in subsection 2.2 of this section, or the context in which the term is used clearly requires a different meaning, the terms used in this rule have the definitions provided in W.Va. Code §§31A-1-2 and 31A-8G-1, *et seq.*

2.2. Terms defined.

2.2.1. “Participant” means a regulatory sandbox participant as that term is defined in W. Va. Code §31A-8G-2.

2.2.2. “Sandbox” means the regulatory sandbox program as that term is defined in W. Va. Code §31A-8G-2.

2.2.3. “Self-regulatory organization” means an entity, such as a non governmental organization, which has the power to create and enforce stand-alone industry and professional regulations and standards on its own, such as the Global Financial Innovation Network and the American Consumer Financial Innovation Network.

**§106-21-3. Objectives; Initial and Extension Applications.**

3.1. The operation of the fintech regulatory sandbox program shall have the following objectives:

3.1.1. The testing of innovative financial products or services;

3.1.2. The analysis of regulatory, supervisory, and consumer protection statutes and rules in the use of financial technology; and

3.1.3. The identification of potential amendments to existing laws and rules and their application to financial products and services that would encourage and enable innovation in financial services.

3.2. The Commissioner or his or her designee may consult with prospective sandbox participants before an application is filed to learn about the business model of the prospective participant and determine whether the innovative financial product or service is appropriate for the sandbox. Consultations made pursuant to the section shall be confidential and not subject to disclosure.

3.3. A prospective sandbox participant shall complete and submit an application to the Commissioner on a form prescribed by the Commissioner. The Commissioner may direct an applicant to file a license application through the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry operated by the State Regulatory Registry, LLC. The application shall be attested to as to its completeness and veracity.

3.4. The Commissioner may refuse to accept an incomplete application. The time period for making a determination on an application shall not commence until a complete application is received.

3.5. As a part of the application process, at the Commissioner's discretion, the following individuals may be required to submit release forms as a part of the fingerprint based background review process for participation in the sandbox: Chief Executive Officer, President, owners and investors controlling either directly or indirectly 10% or more of the applicant as well as other individuals that are identified as controlling the day to day activity of the applicant.

#### **§106-21-4. Consumer Protection Bond.**

4.1. The consumer protection bond required by the sandbox shall be in place before an innovative product or service is made available to consumers.

4.2. The Commissioner may require a sandbox participant to increase or decrease its consumer protection bond depending upon the risk profile of the product or service and the number of consumers served. In no event shall a bond amount be less than that required by statute.

#### **§106-21-5. Information Sharing Agreements.**

5.1. The Commissioner may enter into information sharing agreements with other governmental agencies or self-regulatory organizations to carry out the purpose of the regulatory sandbox program or for any other purpose relating to the sandbox.

5.2. The Commissioner may participate in multi-jurisdictional agreements to further the purposes of the regulatory sandbox program.

#### **§106-21-6. Applicability of Administrative Due Process Provisions.**

6.1. Existing administrative procedure laws and rules which are applicable to a particular program or body of law shall apply to the extent not inconsistent with the regulatory sandbox program. If a sandbox participant would have required a license as a money transmitter, for example, to operate outside of the sandbox, those administrative procedure laws applicable to money transmitters would apply.

6.2. If a sandbox participant offers a product or service that would normally require a license in more than one program or body of law, the Commissioner shall use the procedural laws and rules most applicable to the product or service at issue.

**§106-21-7. Partnership with Existing Financial Institution.**

7.1. The Commissioner or his or her designee shall make available a list of financial institutions currently licensed and regulated by the Division of Financial Institutions upon request of an applicant.

7.2. An applicant shall attest on its application that it has either entered into a partnership with an existing financial institution to access the market in West Virginia to test an innovative product or service or demonstrate that it has in good faith attempted to establish a partnership with an existing financial institution in this state.

**§106-21-8. Disclosures Related to Activity in Other Sandbox Jurisdictions.**

8.1. Applicants must disclose whether they have conducted a similar test of the same product or services or a similar product or services in another jurisdiction operating a sandbox program.

8.2. An applicant must also submit the following information as a part of the application process:

8.2.1. A copy of any approved or denied application by the applicant that was submitted to another jurisdiction operating a sandbox program, if any.

8.2.2. A statement concerning whether the applicant's regulatory sandbox participation elsewhere, if any, were successful or not, or remain ongoing.

8.2.3. A statement by the applicant describing any complaints tied to its regulatory sandbox participation in another jurisdiction, if any, and their status or resolution.