



**WEST VIRGINIA SECRETARY OF STATE**

**MAC WARNER**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW DIVISION**

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6/21/2023 3:52:14 PM

Office of West Virginia  
Secretary Of State

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**NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

AGENCY: Miners Health Safety And Training

TITLE-SERIES: 56-12

RULE TYPE: Legislative      Amendment to Existing Rule: Yes      Repeal of existing rule: No

RULE NAME: Rule Governing Assessing Health and Safety  
Violation Penalties

CITE STATUTORY AUTHORITY: W. Va. Code 22A-1-21

COMMENTS LIMITED TO:

Written

DATE OF PUBLIC HEARING:

LOCATION OF PUBLIC HEARING:

DATE WRITTEN COMMENT PERIOD ENDS: 07/21/2023 4:00 PM

COMMENTS MAY BE MAILED OR EMAILED TO:

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PLEASE INDICATE IF THIS FILING INCLUDES:

RELEVANT FEDERAL STATUTES OR REGULATIONS: No

(IF YES, PLEASE UPLOAD IN THE SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FIELD)

INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE: No

(IF YES, PLEASE UPLOAD IN THE SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FIELD)

PROVIDE A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE CONTENT OF THE RULE:

This rule establishes the procedure whereby the agency assesses civil monetary penalties for violations of the state's mining laws.

SUMMARIZE IN A CLEAR AND CONCISE MANNER CONTENTS OF CHANGES IN THE RULE AND A STATEMENT OF CIRCUMSTANCES REQUIRING THE RULE:

The changes to this rule are for the purpose of updating language found in this rule and incorporating formatting recommendations of the Secretary of State's office.

SUMMARIZE IN A CLEAR AND CONCISE MANNER THE OVERALL ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED RULE:

A. ECONOMIC IMPACT ON REVENUES OF STATE GOVERNMENT:

None

B. ECONOMIC IMPACT ON SPECIAL REVENUE ACCOUNTS:

None

C. ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE RULE ON THE STATE OR ITS RESIDENTS:

None

D. FISCAL NOTE DETAIL:

Effect of Proposal	Fiscal Year		
	2023 Increase/Decrease (use "-")	2024 Increase/Decrease (use "-")	Fiscal Year (Upon Full Implementation)
<b>1. Estimated Total Cost</b>	-0-	-0-	-0-
<b>Personal Services</b>	-0-	-0-	-0-
<b>Current Expenses</b>	-0-	-0-	-0-
<b>Repairs and Alterations</b>	-0-	-0-	-0-
<b>Assets</b>	-0-	-0-	-0-
<b>Other</b>	-0-	-0-	-0-
<b>2. Estimated Total Revenues</b>	-0-	-0-	-0-

E. EXPLANATION OF ABOVE ESTIMATES (INCLUDING LONG-RANGE EFFECT):

N/A

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

Yes

**Garner Marks -- 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 56  
LEGISLATIVE RULE  
OFFICE OF MINERS' HEALTH, SAFETY AND TRAINING

SERIES 12  
RULES GOVERNING ASSESSING HEALTH  
AND SAFETY VIOLATION PENALTIES

**§56-12-1. General.**

1.1. Scope. -- ~~These rules establish~~ This rule establishes the procedure whereby the Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training assesses civil monetary penalties, pursuant to W. Va. Code §22A-1-21, to those having violated the state's mine health and safety laws.

1.2. Authority. -- W. Va. Code §22A-1-21.

1.3. Filing Date. -- ~~April 10, 2014~~ \_\_\_\_\_.

1.4. Effective Date. -- ~~July 1, 2014~~ \_\_\_\_\_.

1.5. Sunset Provision. -- This rule shall terminate and have no further force or effect upon August 1, 2029.

**§56-12-2. Definitions.**

2.1. ~~Unless herein defined, all terms used in this rule shall have the same meaning as they are defined in W. Va. Code §22A-1-2.~~ Unless the context in which a word or phrase appears clearly requires a different meaning, all terms used in this rule that are not defined herein shall have the meanings set forth in W. Va. Code §22A-1-2.

2.2. "Director" shall mean ~~means~~ the director of the State of West Virginia Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training.

2.3. "Knowing violation" shall mean ~~means~~ a violation occurring when:

2.3.1. An operator (or miner, for an individual violation) causes a violative condition or practice by exercising reckless and willful disregard of mandatory health and safety standards, or recklessly and willfully failed to correct an unsafe condition or practice which was known to exist; or

2.3.2. An operator refuses to comply with any order issued under W. Va. Code §§22A-1-14 or 15;  
or

2.3.3. An operator refuses to comply with any order issued in a final decision under ~~Chapter 22A, article 1, of the~~ W. Va. Code §22A-1-1, except for an order incorporated in a decision under W. Va. Code §§22A-1-21(a) or 22(b).

2.4. "Good faith" shall mean ~~means~~ that, in the judgment of the inspector, the operator has demonstrated extraordinary effort above and beyond that which would normally be expected to abate the violation.

2.5. "Mine health and safety laws" ~~shall mean~~ ~~means~~ the provisions of W. Va. Code Chapters 22 and §22A ~~articles one, two, five and six of chapter twenty-two-a, and chapter twenty-two of the West Virginia Code~~, and any rule promulgated thereunder, relating to health and safety standards.

2.6. "Independent contractor" has the same meaning as that term is defined at ~~36 CSR 20~~ W. Va. Code State R. §36-20-1 et seq.

2.7. "Annual tonnage" ~~shall mean~~ ~~means~~ tonnage produced in the previous calendar year, or, in the case of a mine opened or owned less than one full calendar year, the tonnage thus far produced multiplied to an annual amount based on months of operation.

**§56-12-3. Assessment Procedure For Operators.**

3.1. Civil monetary penalty assessments are mandatory.

3.2. The amount of a civil monetary penalty assessments will be determined based upon consideration of the following five criteria:

3.2.1. Gravity of the violation;

3.2.2. History of previous violations;

3.2.3. Size of the business charged with a violation; ~~and~~

3.2.4. Demonstrated good faith in achieving compliance after notification of the violation; and

3.2.5. Whether the operator was negligent.

3.3. Gravity of the violation will be evaluated by the inspector or representative of the director, and points allocated accordingly.

3.3.1. Points will be allocated in the following four categories:

3.3.1.a. Likelihood of an occurrence of an event which the health and safety laws are intended to prevent;

3.3.1.b. The severity of the injury which might be expected to result from such an occurrence; and

3.3.1.c. The number of persons potentially affected by such an occurrence; and

3.3.1.d. Whether the operator was negligent.

3.3.2. Points will be allocated in the following manner:

3.3.2.a. Likelihood of occurrence

- Unlikely . . . . . 0 points
- Reasonably likely . . . . . 10 points
- Occurred . . . . . 20 points

3.3.2.b. Severity of injury expected

None . . . . .	0 points
No lost work days . . . . .	6 points
Lost/restricted work days . . .	11 points
Permanently disabling . . . . .	15 points
Fatal . . . . .	20 points

3.3.2.c. Number of persons potentially affected

0 . . . . .	0 points
1 . . . . .	1 points
2 . . . . .	2 points
3 . . . . .	4 points
4 to 5 . . . . .	6 points
6 to 9 . . . . .	8 points
More than 9 . . . . .	10 points

3.3.2.d. Negligence

No negligence . . . . .	0 points
Low negligence . . . . .	10 points
Moderate negligence . . . . .	15 points
High negligence . . . . .	20 points

3.4. The operator’s history of violations over the previous twenty-four (24) months will be evaluated by the inspector or representative of the director and points allocated accordingly.

3.4.1. For mine operators, points will be calculated based upon the average number of violations per inspection day over the previous twenty-four (24) months.

3.4.2. For independent contractors, points will be calculated based upon the total number of violations during the previous twenty-four (24) months.

3.4.3. Points will be allocated in the following manner:

3.4.3.a. Mine operators:

Average number violations/ inspection day

0 . . . . .	0 points
Over 0 to 0.3 . . . . .	2 points
Over 0.3 to 0.5 . . . . .	5 points
Over 0.5 to 0.7 . . . . .	8 points
Over 0.7 to 0.9 . . . . .	11 points
Over 0.9 to 1.1 . . . . .	14 points
Over 1.1 to 1.3 . . . . .	17 points
Over 1.3 to 1.5 . . . . .	20 points
Over 1.5 to 1.7 . . . . .	22 points
Over 1.7 to 1.9 . . . . .	23 points

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Over 1.9 to 2.1 . . . . .	24 points
Over 2.1 . . . . .	25 points

3.4.3.b. Independent contractors:

Total number of violations	
1 to 5 . . . . .	2 points
6 to 10 . . . . .	5 points
11 to 15 . . . . .	8 points
16 to 20 . . . . .	11 points
21 to 25 . . . . .	14 points
26 to 30 . . . . .	17 points
31 to 35 . . . . .	20 points
36 to 40 . . . . .	22 points
41 to 45 . . . . .	23 points
46 to 50 . . . . .	24 points
More than 50 . . . . .	25 points

3.5. Size of the business charged with a violation will be evaluated by the inspector or representative of the director, and points allocated accordingly. Size of the mine will be calculated by considering the annual tonnage of the mine. Mines which have not submitted tonnage reports by the dates required by W. Va. Code §22A-2-77 will be assessed the maximum amount of five (5) points.

Size of Business (annual tonnage)	
0 - 100,000 tons . . . . .	1 point
100,001 - 500,000 tons . . . . .	2 points
500,001 - 1,000,000 tons . . . . .	3 points
1,000,001 - 2,000,000 tons . . . . .	4 points
Over 2,000,000 tons . . . . .	5 points

3.6. The points allocated in the manner set forth in Sections 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5, above, will be totaled, and the total number converted to a dollar amount, as per Table 1, infra.

3.7. Demonstrated good faith by the operator in achieving compliance after notification of the violation will be evaluated by the inspector or representative of the director, and the total dollar amount of the penalty may be modified accordingly.

3.7.1. If the operator fails to abate the violation within the time prescribed, and there are, in the opinion of the inspector or representative of the director, extenuating circumstances beyond the operator’s control which prevent the abatement of the violation within such time, the amount of the assessment will not be affected.

3.7.2. If the operator fails to abate the violation within the prescribed time, and an order is issued pursuant to W. Va. Code §22A-1-15(b), the total dollar amount of the assessment will be increased by fifteen percent (15%).

3.7.3. If the operator was already working to correct the violation when discovered, or, in the judgment of the inspector, the operator has demonstrated extraordinary effort above and beyond that

which would normally be expected to abate the violation, the total dollar amount of the assessment will be decreased by fifteen percent (15%), if the original assessment is greater than sixty dollars (\$60).

**§56-12-4. Assessment Procedure For Knowing Violations.**

4.1. In addition to any monetary assessment determined under section 3 of these rules, any operator issued a knowing violation shall be assessed one (1) knowing point for every twenty (20) civil penalty points accrued. Knowing points are converted to a monetary amount, as per the following table:

**Knowing Civil Penalty Conversion Table**

Civil Points	Penalty Points	Knowing Penalty
0-20	1	\$1,000
21-40	2	\$2,000
41-60	3	\$3,000
61-80	4	\$4,000
81-100	5	\$5,000

4.2. In addition to any assessment determined under section 3 of these rules, a subsequent knowing violation, issued to the same operator at the same operation during the same inspection within the same quarter, shall result in the assessment of two (2) knowing points for every twenty (20) civil penalty points accrued. Subsequent knowing points are converted to a monetary amount as per the following table:

**Subsequent Knowing Civil Penalty Conversion Table**

Civil Points	Penalty Points	Knowing Penalty
0-20	2	\$2,000
21-40	4	\$4,000
41-60	6	\$6,000
61-80	8	\$8,000
81-100	10	\$10,000

**§56-12-5. Assessment Procedure For Individuals.**

5.1. Any miner who knowingly violates the mine health and safety laws shall be assessed a civil penalty not to exceed two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) for each such occurrence.

5.2. The amount of civil monetary penalty assessments will be determined based upon consideration of two (2) criteria:

5.2.1. Gravity of the violation; and

5.2.2. History of prior violations.

5.3. Gravity of the violation will be evaluated by the inspector or representative of the director, and points allocated accordingly.

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5.3.1. Points will be allocated in the following three (3) categories:

5.3.1.a. Likelihood of an occurrence of an event, which the health and safety laws are intended to prevent;

5.3.1.b. The severity of the injury which might be expected to result from such an occurrence; and

5.3.1.c. The number of persons potentially affected by such an occurrence.

5.3.2. Points will be allocated in the following manner:

5.3.2.a. Likelihood of occurrence

Unlikely	0 points
Reasonably likely	10 points
Occurred	20 points

5.3.2.b. Severity of injury expected

None	0 points
No lost work days	5 points
Lost/restricted work days	10 points
Permanently disabling	15 points
Fatal	20 points

5.3.2.c. Number of persons potentially affected

0	0 points
1	5 points
2	10 points
3	15 points
4 to 5	20 points
6 to 9	25 points
More than 9	30 points

5.4. The miner’s history of prior violations over the previous thirty-six (36) months will be evaluated by the inspector or representative of the director, and points allocated accordingly. Points will be allocated in the following manner:

1 violation	15 points
2 or more violations	30 points

5.5. The points allocated in the manner set forth in 5.3 and 5.4, above, will be totaled, and the total number converted to a dollar amount by using the following table:

**Civil Penalty Point Conversion Table For Individuals**

Points	Penalty
1 to 10	\$50.00
11 to 20	100.00

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21 to 30 .....	150.00
31 to 40 .....	175.00
41 to 50 .....	200.00
51 to 60 .....	225.00
61 to 70 .....	240.00
71 to 100 .....	250.00

**Table 1**  
**Civil Penalty Point Conversion Table For Operators**

Points	Penalty (\$)	Points	Penalty (\$)
0 - 15	60.00	66	840.00
16 - 31	96.00	67	880.00
32	100.00	68	927.00
33	104.00	69	960.00
34	108.00	70	1000.00
35	114.00	71	1050.00
36	120.00	72	1100.00
37	126.00	73	1150.00
38	132.00	74	1333.00
39	138.00	75	1667.00
40	144.00	76	1800.00
41	152.00	77	1933.00
42	160.00	78	2067.00
43	168.00	79	2200.00
44	176.00	80	2333.00
45	184.00	81	2467.00
46	194.00	82	2600.00
47	204.00	83	2733.00
48	214.00	84	2867.00
49	224.00	85	3000.00
50	234.00	86	3133.00
51	246.00	87	3267.00
52	256.00	88	3400.00
53	266.00	89	3533.00
54	276.00	90	3667.00
55	286.00	91	3800.00
56	300.00	92	3933.00
57	318.00	93	4067.00
58	336.00	94	4200.00
59	354.00	95	4333.00
60	372.00	96	4467.00
61	392.00	97	4600.00
62	412.00	98	4733.00
63	434.00	99	4867.00
64	456.00	100	5000.00
65	480.00		