safety, also beneficial to achieving the expected expeditious handling and delivery of the mailpiece.

Commercial mailers of mailpieces not meeting the requirement for using a unique IMpb and IMmb, as outlined in the DMM and Publication 199, *Intelligent Mail Package Barcode (IMpb) Implementation Guide for Confirmation Services and Electronic Payment Systems,* will be subject to the Package Quality Noncompliance Fee provided in the Notice 123–Price List.

The Postal Service adopts the described changes to *Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service,* Domestic Mail Manual (DMM), incorporated by reference in the *Code of Federal Regulations.* We will publish an appropriate amendment to 39 CFR part 111 to reflect these changes.

List of Subjects in 39 CFR Part 111

Administrative practice and procedure, Postal Service.

Accordingly, the Postal Service amends *Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service,* Domestic Mail Manual (DMM), incorporated by reference in the Code of Federal Regulations as follows (see 39 CFR 111.1):

PART 111—[AMENDED]

■ 1. The authority citation for 39 CFR Part 111 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 5 U.S.C. 552(a); 13 U.S.C. 301–307; 18 U.S.C. 1692–1737; 39 U.S.C. 101, 401–404, 414, 416, 3001–3018, 3201–3220, 3401–3406, 3621, 3622, 3626, 3629, 3631–3633, 3641, 3681–3685, and 5001.

■ 2. Revise *Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service,* Domestic Mail Manual (DMM) as follows:

Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service, Domestic Mail Manual (DMM)

* * * * *

700 Special Standards

703 Nonprofit USPS Marketing Mail and Other Unique Eligibility

* * * * *

5.0 Free Matter for the Blind and Other Physically Handicapped Persons

5.1 Basic Information

5.1.1 General

[Revise the first sentence of 5.1.1 to read as follows:]

Subject to the standards below, matter may be entered free of postage and is not subject to the Hazmat Handling Fee if mailed by or for the use of blind or other persons who cannot read or use conventionally printed materials due to a physical handicap. * * *

* * * * *

5.4 Preparation

5.4.1 Basic Standards

All matter mailed under this standard:

* * * * *

[Revise the text of 5.4.1 by adding a new item d to read as follows:]

d. Parcels mailed under this standard (outbound and returns) must bear an Intelligent Mail package barcode (IMpb) and an Intelligent Mail matrix barcode (IMmb) prepared under 204.2.0. Commercial mailers of mailpieces not meeting the requirements for using a unique IMpb and IMmb, as outlined in 204.2.1.6 and Publication 199, *Intelligent Mail Package Barcode (IMpb) Implementation Guide for Confirmation Services and Electronic Payment Systems,* will be subject to the Package Quality Noncompliance Fee (See Notice 123–Price List.). For details see PostalPro at *https://postalpro.usps.com.*

* * * * *

Colleen Hibbert-Kapler,

Attorney, Ethics and Legal Compliance.

[FR Doc. 2026–17884 Filed 8–31–26; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE P

FEDERAL MARITIME COMMISSION

46 CFR Part 502

[FMC–2026–0331]

RIN 3072–AD00

Charge Complaint Procedures

AGENCY: Federal Maritime Commission.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The Federal Maritime Commission (FMC or Commission) is issuing this rule to bring awareness that as an alternative to following the Commission's Interim Procedure for Charge Complaints, Charge Complaints may be filed with the Commission following traditional complaint processes involving either an Administrative Law Judge or Small Claims Officer. In accordance with the statute, when a person files a Charge Complaint as a traditional complaint, the Administrative Law Judge or Small Claims Officer must treat the complaint as such, including by requiring the common carrier to bear the burden of establishing the reasonableness of any demurrage or detention charges pursuant to the Commission's Interpretive Rule on Unjust and Unreasonable Practices With Respect to Demurrage and Detention.

DATES: This rule is effective September 1, 2026.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David Eng, Secretary; Phone: (202) 523–5725; Email: *secretary@fmc.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background and Legal Authority

On June 16, 2022, the Ocean Shipping Reform Act of 2022 (OSRA 2022) (Pub. L. 117–146) was enacted. Section 10 of the Act, ''Charge complaints,'' codified at 46 U.S.C. 41310, states that a person may submit to the Commission ''information concerning complaints about charges assessed by a common carrier.'' The statute directs the Commission, upon such a submission, to ''promptly investigate the charge'' and order refunds and penalties for charges that do not comply with 46 U.S.C. 41104(a) and 41102. Charge Complaints under 46 U.S.C. 41310 may be submitted regarding a broad range of noncompliant charges assessed by a common carrier. While complaints about the reasonableness of a demurrage or detention charge tend to be the most common, other carrier fees or charges which are not in compliance with 46 U.S.C. 41104(a) and 41102 may be submitted for investigation. During the investigation, the carrier has an opportunity to submit information related to the charge in question, 46 U.S.C. 41310(b)(1). Whereas a complainant typically bears the burden of establishing violations in adjudicatory hearing proceedings under 46 U.S.C. 41301, OSRA 2022 provides that the respondent carrier ''bear[s] the burden of establishing the reasonableness of any demurrage or detention charges pursuant to [46 CFR] 545.5'' when a Charge Complaint is involved. 46 U.S.C. 41310(b)(2). Section 41310 of the United States Code is self-implementing and became applicable and enforceable on June 16, 2022, when OSRA 2022 was signed into law.

Because the Charge Complaint provisions are self-executing, the Commission adopted an Interim Procedure for Charge Complaints (''Interim Procedure'') to address the new type of complaint.[1] The Interim Procedure is a streamlined procedure designed for faster resolution of Charge Complaint claims without significant participation by the filer. Under the Interim Procedure, a person submits a Charge Complaint and supporting information to the Commission by email

[1] The Commission's Interim Procedure is available on the Commission's website at *https://www.fmc.gov/ocean-shipping-reform-act-of-2022-implementation/guidance-on-charge-complaint-interim-procedure/* (last accessed Aug. 5, 2026).

to *chargecomplaints@fmc.gov.* Commission staff acknowledge the submission and, if necessary, contact the filer to obtain clarification or missing information. When the Commission receives sufficient information, it promptly investigates the complaint by contacting the common carrier and asking the carrier to respond/justify the charge or fee being investigated. Upon completion of the investigation, Commission staff notify both parties.

If the investigation supports a finding that the common carrier's charge or fee is not in compliance with statutes or Commission rules, the parties are informed that the matter will be referred to the Commission's Bureau of Enforcement, Investigations, and Compliance (BEIC). For matters where the investigation supports a finding of a violation, BEIC will recommend that the Commission institute Show Cause proceedings under 46 CFR 502.91 to formally adjudicate the Charge Complaint. Upon approval of FMC staff's recommendation, the Commission will issue an Order to Show Cause naming the specific common carrier and describing the actions alleged to violate 46 U.S.C. 41104(a), 41102, or both, and directing that common carrier to ''show cause'' why it should not be ordered to refund the fees or charges paid or waive such fees. The common carrier is provided the opportunity to ''show cause'' why the common carrier's actions should not be found to constitute a violation of 46 U.S.C. 41104(a) or 41102. The common carrier may submit an affidavit(s) of fact, memoranda of law, and any documentary evidence in support of its position. The Order to Show Cause defines what procedures apply. Charge Complaint-related Show Cause proceedings are conducted on a fast-track basis to provide an early determination concerning the shipper's entitlement to a refund. Procedures not consistent with achieving an expedited decision on refunds or waivers, such as discovery or oral argument, are waived for the refund proceeding. Additional procedures, however, may be requested if desired. If the Commission orders a refund by the common carrier, a separate civil penalty proceeding may also be initiated and referred to the Commission's Office of Administrative Law Judges for consideration of penalties under 46 U.S.C. 41107 and 41109. This is an entirely separate proceeding handled under the Commission's more detailed rules of practice and procedure.

The Commission's statement that the Interim Procedure ''cannot be combined with formal proceedings under 46 CFR 502.61, or small claims proceedings—formal or informal, under 46 CFR 502.301–502.321'' has been interpreted by some individuals as meaning that the Interim Procedure is the only route for bringing Charge Complaints.[2] That is not the case. The Commission's Interim Procedure is merely one way for the Commission to meet its statutory obligation to ''investigate'' Charge Complaints. An ''investigation'' under 46 U.S.C. 41310 can also be satisfied through the same processes that satisfies the ''investigation'' of complaints under 46 U.S.C. 41301(c).[3] The Commission's FAQs on Charge Complaints clearly explain, for example, that a person who has submitted a Charge Complaint under the Interim Procedure can still file a subsequent formal or small claims complaint with the Commission even where the initial investigation does not support a finding of a violation.[4] Likewise, the Commission's ''Industry Advisory—Interim Procedures for Submitting 'Charge Complaints' Under 46 U.S.C. 41310'' issued on July 14, 2022, stated that a filer may choose to ''pursue and control their own legal case, including with the assistance of their own attorney if desired, . . . under . . . Part 502 of the Commission's regulations.''[5]

The Interim Procedure's prohibition on ''combined claims'' was implemented to recognize two limitations. First, a Charge Complaint cannot simultaneously be investigated by both an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ)/Small Claims Officer (SCO) and by agency staff under the Interim Procedure. Second, if choosing to file under the Interim Procedure, the filer cannot include claims other than Charge Complaints. This is because the Interim Procedure implemented under the authority of 46 U.S.C. 41310 only addressed Charge Complaints. As such, the Interim Procedure cannot address non-Charge Complaint claims. Thus, allowing filers to also include non-Charge Complaint claims when proceeding under the Interim Procedure would negate the goal of the new process, which is to allow for a streamlined and shortened timeframe to resolve Charge Complaint claims.

A filing that meets the requirement of 46 U.S.C. 41310(a) on its own or combined with other claims, in a private party formal or small claims complaint, is a Charge Complaint regardless of whether the filer submits it to the Commission under the Interim Procedure or files under Subparts E (§§ 502.61–502.75) or S (§§ 502.301–502.305) of the Commission's Part 502 rules. The Commission's July 2022 Industry Advisory incorrectly stated that Charge Complaints filed as a formal or small claims complaint could be filed under 46 U.S.C. 41301(a). A claim that meets the requirements of 46 U.S.C. 41310(a) *is* a Charge Complaint and *must* be resolved under the terms of 46 U.S.C. 41310, including the required burden shifting for demurrage or detention charges, regardless of whether the claim is submitted to the Commission under the Interim Procedure or under traditional complaint processes. So long as the submission includes the applicable bills of lading numbers and invoices, and alleges violations of 46 U.S.C. 41104(a), 46 U.S.C. 41102 (or both), 46 U.S.C. 41310 directs the Commission to consider such a submission as a Charge Complaint. If a Charge Complaint filed under traditional complaint process contains a mix of complaints under 46 U.S.C. 41301 and 41310, those portion(s) which concern charges assessed by a common carrier, provided that the submission includes the applicable bills of lading numbers and invoices, and alleges violation(s) of 46 U.S.C. 41104(a), 46 U.S.C. 41102, or both, must, by operation of law be considered by the Commission a ''Charge Complaint'' under 46 U.S.C. 41310. The remainder of the submission will continue to fall under 46 U.S.C. 41301.

The Commission is issuing this rule to highlight these existing statutory requirements.

II. Discussion of Rule

The Commission clarifies that a Charge Complaint must be treated consistent with 46 U.S.C. 41310 and further clarifies that a Charge Complaint may be investigated via a filer by: (1) filing it through the Interim Procedure, (2) filing a private party formal

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[2] Ocean Shipping Reform Act of 2022 Implementation, Frequently Asked Questions, FAQ 1 (*https://www.fmc.gov/ocean-shipping-reform-act-of-2022-implementation/* (last accessed Aug. 5, 2026)).

[3] The Commission's procedures for 46 U.S.C. 41301 complaints are flexible. *See e.g, Fed. Mar. Comm'n* v. *S.C. State Ports Auth.*, 535 U.S. 743, 775, 122 S. Ct. 1864, 1882, 152 L. Ed. 2d 962 (2002) (Justice Breyer with Justice Stevens, Justice Souter, and Justice Ginsburg, dissenting) (''Interestingly enough, it does not say that the Commission must determine the merits of the complaint through agency adjudication, see § 1710(g) (1994 ed., Supp. V). . . .'').

[4] Charge Complaint FAQ 6, *https://www.fmc.gov/ocean-shipping-reform-act-of-2022-implementation/guidance-on-charge-complaint-interim-procedure/#frequently-asked-questions* (last accessed Aug. 12, 2026).

[5] *https://www.fmc.gov/articles/industry-advisory-interim-procedures-for-submitting-charge-complaints-under-46-u-s-c-%c2%a7-41310/* (last accessed Aug. 12, 2026).

complaint under § 502.62, or (3) filing a small claims complaint under § 502.304. A filer pursuing a traditional complaint process for a Charge Complaint must adhere to all procedural requirements set forth in 46 CFR part 502, including for the format and content of their complaint. Filers are encouraged to clearly identify claims as ''Charge Complaints'' in their submission. However, in accordance with law, so long as the complaint concerns charges assessed by a common carrier, alleges a violation of 46 U.S.C 41104(a) and/or 46 U.S.C. 41102, and includes the applicable bill of lading numbers and invoices, it is a Charge Complaint and it will be resolved in accordance with 46 U.S.C. 41310. This includes application of the burden shifting requirement for demurrage or detention charges under 46 U.S.C. 41310(b)(2). The Commission is amending 46 CFR 502.62(a)(3)(v) and adding a new 502.301(b) to alert readers to this fact.

For small claims complaints, both parties must consent to the determination of a Charge Complaint under informal adjudication procedures for the claim to be decided under subpart S. If both parties do not consent, the Charge Complaint will be decided under the procedures of subpart T. The potential application of civil penalties does not affect the $50,000 limit for small claims. Civil penalties are not part of the claim total—they may not be requested by claimants and are payable, if assessed, to the U.S. Treasury's General Fund. Paragraph (c) of section 502.301, as revised, (previous § 502.301(b)) reflects this. Paragraph 502.62(a)(4)(iv) has also been revised to reflect civil penalty application to Charge Complaints filed as formal complaints.

Section 41301 complaints must be filed within three years after the claim accrues in order to obtain reparations, 46 U.S.C. 41301(a). Section 41310 of title 46 of the United States Code, however, does not contain a statute of limitations for Charge Complaints. A Charge Complaint may be filed for any covered violations that occurred on or after the enactment of OSRA 2022 (June 16, 2022). OSRA 2022 does not apply retroactively. The absence of a statute of limitations in section 41310 is reflected in the Commission's amendments to §§ 502.62(a)(4)(iii) and 502.302(a).

The Commission's Interim Procedure for Charge Complaints continues to provide important benefits to filers as an alternative to independently pursuing a traditional claim. First, it allows the Commission to assist filers by requesting missing information that might be necessary to perfect a complaint. That level of assistance is not available if a filer proceeds directly with a Charge Complaint under traditional procedures. Second, those filers using the Interim Procedure do not currently pay any fees.[6] Complainants seeking resolution of a Charge Complaint through the Commission's traditional claims processes are required to pay the filing fee, currently $387 for Subpart E and $176 for Subpart S. Finally, because formal action arising out of a Charge Complaint investigation is brought by BEIC against the common carrier, the complaining party is not expected to testify or provide additional information in the Order to Show Cause proceeding before the Commission.

For these reasons, the Commission's current Interim Procedure for Charge Complaints remains in effect. A person who wants to file a Charge Complaint has the option to proceed under either the Interim Procedure for Charge Complaints or under the Commission's traditional complaint processes. The processes may not run simultaneously, however, and filers are prohibited from filing a duplicate claim that has been decided on the merits.

III. Rulemaking Analyses

A. Administrative Law Matters

These changes to the Code of Federal Regulations are informational only and are intended to draw attention to the application of 46 U.S.C. 41310, a self-implementing statute, within the existing hearing procedures of 46 CFR part 502. They are not intended to have the force and effect of law, or to implement, interpret, or prescribe law or policy. The rule does not change substantive standards or affect the rights or obligations of non-agency parties. In accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), the Commission therefore finds that good cause exists that public comment is impracticable and unnecessary, 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B). For these same reasons, the Commission finds that there is good cause to establish an effective date less than 30 days after publication of this amendment, 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3). This rule is effective upon publication in the **Federal Register**.

[6] The Commission is investigating the appropriateness of fees for Charge Complaints submitted under the Interim Procedure under requirements of the Independent Offices Appropriation Act of 1952, 31 U.S.C. 9701 and Office of Management and Budget Circular A–25, *User Charges*. Currently, however, there is no fee. If the Commission believe that imposing a fee is warranted, that will be done through the Administrative Procedure Act's rulemaking procedures and published in the **Federal Register**.

The Regulatory Flexibility Act, 5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.,* does not apply when notice and comment is not required by the APA or other law. *See* 5 U.S.C. 601(2). The Commission is therefore not required to complete a regulatory flexibility analysis for this action. Additionally, the provisions of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act (SBREFA) are not applicable, *see* 5 U.S.C. 804(3)(C). SBREFA's definition of the term ''rule'' does not include ''any rule of agency organization, procedure, or practice that does not substantially affect the rights or obligations of non-agency parties''.

Because this action is not intended to have the force and effect of law, or to implement, interpret, or prescribe law or policy, it is exempt from Executive Order 142192 and Office and Management Review under Executive Order 12866.

B. Congressional Review Act

This action is a not a ''rule'' for purposes of the Congressional Review Act because it is a rule of agency organization, procedure or practice that does not substantially affect the rights and obligation of non-agency parties.

C. Paperwork Reduction Act

This amendment does not contain any new or modified collection of information requirements as defined by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. *See* 5 CFR 1320.3(c).

D. National Environmental Policy Act

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is not applicable to this action. NEPA only applies to major federal actions. The terms ''major'' and ''federal action'' each have independent force. This is not a major federal action because it does not impact the legal rights or obligations of non-agency parties. Alternatively, this rule is categorically excluded under 46 CFR 504.4(a)(4) as promulgation of procedural rules pursuant to 46 CFR part 502.

E. Executive Order 12988 (Civil Justice Reform)

This rule meets the applicable standards in E.O. 12988, ''Civil Justice Reform,'' (61 FR 4729, Feb. 7, 1996) to minimize litigation, eliminate ambiguity, and reduce burden.

List of Subjects in 46 CFR Part 502

Administrative practice and procedure, Claims, Equal access to justice, Investigations, Lawyers, Maritime carriers, Penalties, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

For the reasons discussed in the preamble, the Federal Maritime Commission amends 46 CFR part 502 as follows:

PART 502—RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

■ 1. Revise the authority citation for part 502 to read as follows:

Authority: 5 U.S.C. 504, 551, 552, 553, 556(c), 559, 561–569, 571–584, 591–596; 18 U.S.C. 207; 28 U.S.C. 2112(a); 31 U.S.C. 9701; 46 U.S.C. 40103–40104, 40304, 40306, 40501–40503, 40701–40706, 41101–41109, 41301–41310, 44101–44106, 46105; 5 CFR part 2635.

■ 2. Amend § 502.62 by revising paragraphs (a)(3)(v) and (a)(4)(iii) and (iv) to read as follows:

§ 502.62 Private party complaints for formal adjudication.

(a) * * *

(3) * * *

(v) Shipping Act violation must be alleged. If the complaint fails to indicate the sections of the Act alleged to have been violated or clearly to state facts which support the allegations, the Commission may, on its own initiative, require the complaint to be amended to supply such further particulars as it deems necessary. If a complaint concerns charges assessed by a common carrier, includes the applicable bills of lading numbers and invoices, and alleges violation(s) of 46 U.S.C. 41104(a), 46 U.S.C. 41102, or both, the complaint or, if other violations are alleged, those portions of the complaint concerning charges assessed by a common carrier meeting these requirements, shall be considered a Charge Complaint under 46 U.S.C. 41310.

(4) * * *

(iii) A complaint seeking reparations under 46 U.S.C. 41301(a) must be filed within three years after the claim accrues. Notification to the Commission that such a complaint may or will be filed for the recovery of reparation will not constitute a filing within the applicable statutory period. There is no statute of limitations for a Charge Complaint; however, the disputed charge or fee must have been assessed after the Ocean Shipping Reform Act of 2022 (OSRA 2022) (Pub. L. 117–146) was enacted and became effective on June 16, 2022.

(iv) Civil penalties must not be requested in private party complaint proceedings. Civil penalties will not be awarded in a 46 U.S.C. 41301 complaint. In the event of a finding in a 46 U.S.C. 41310 Charge Complaint that a charge does not comply with 46 U.S.C. 41104(a) or 46 U.S.C. 41102 after submission to the Commission under 46 U.S.C. 41310(a), in accordance with 46 U.S.C. 41310(d), the Commission shall apply a civil penalty under 46 U.S.C. 41107 to the common carrier making such charge.

* * * * *

■ 3. Revise § 502.301 to read as follows:

§ 502.301 Statement of policy.

(a) *Complaints.* Section 41301 of title 46 of the United States Code permits any person to file a complaint with the Commission claiming a violation occurring in connection with the foreign commerce of the United States and to seek reparation for any injury caused by that violation.

(b) *Charge complaints.* Section 41310 of title 46 of the United States Code permits any person to submit information concerning complaints about charges assessed by a common carrier, so long as the submission includes the applicable bills of lading numbers and invoices, and alleges violations of 46 U.S.C. 41104(a), 46 U.S.C. 41102, or both. Such complaints may seek a refund of the charges assessed.

(c) *Small claims.* With the consent of both parties, claims filed under this subpart in the amount of $50,000 or less will be decided by a Small Claims Officer appointed by the Federal Maritime Commission's Chief Administrative Law Judge, without the necessity of formal proceedings under the rules of this part. Civil penalties are paid directly to the General Fund of the U.S. Treasury, are not part of the claim, and do not have any impact of the $50,000 limit. Authority to issue decisions under this subpart is delegated to the appointed Small Claims Officer.

(d) *Finality.* Determination of claims under this subpart shall be administratively final and conclusive.

■ 4. Amend § 502.302 by revising paragraph (a) to read as follows:

§ 502.302 Limitations of actions.

(a) Claims alleging violations of 46 U.S.C. subtitle IV (''the Shipping Act'') must be filed within three years from the time the cause of action accrues to obtain reparations, but claims concerning complaints about charges under 46 U.S.C. 41310 are not subject to the three-year limitation period.

* * * * *

For the Commission.

David Eng,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2026–17876 Filed 8–31–26; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6730–02–P

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

Office of Federal Procurement Policy

48 CFR Part 9903

RIN 0348–AB85

Increase of Monetary Thresholds and Other Matters Related to Cost Accounting Standards Program Requirements

AGENCY: Cost Accounting Standards Board, Office of Federal Procurement Policy. Office of Management and Budget.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Cost Accounting Standards Board (Board), is publishing a final rule to increase the Cost Accounting Standards (CAS) thresholds and agency waiver authority, and issue clarifications on application of the CAS thresholds and exemptions to indefinite delivery contracts (IDCs).

DATES: Effective October 1, 2026.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John L. McClung, Manager, Cost Accounting Standards Board (telephone: 202–881–9758; email: *OMBCASB@omb.eop.gov.*).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

On March 20, 2026, the Board published a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) (91 FR 13559) to solicit views on the Board's provisional conclusions regarding increases to the CAS thresholds and agency waiver authority, and proposed clarifications on applying the CAS thresholds and exemptions to indefinite delivery contracts (IDCs).

The Board received nine sets of public comments to the NPRM: five from industry associations, two from individual contractors, one from a consulting firm, and one from an individual. Comments strongly supported the Board's proposed actions and the deregulatory nature of the NPRM. Although comments did not provide information to quantify the impact of this final rule, all comments strongly supported the qualitative aspects noted in the NPRM: reduced compliance costs, simplified CAS administration for existing contractors,