

Rules and Regulations

Federal Register

Vol. 85, No. 47

Tuesday, March 10, 2020

This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains regulatory documents having general applicability and legal effect, most of which are keyed to and codified in the Code of Federal Regulations, which is published under 50 titles pursuant to 44 U.S.C. 1510.

The Code of Federal Regulations is sold by the Superintendent of Documents.

FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

12 CFR Part 201

[Docket No. R-1697]

RIN 7100-AF72

Regulation A: Extensions of Credit by Federal Reserve Banks

AGENCY: Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System (“Board”) has adopted final amendments to its Regulation A to reflect the Board’s approval of a decrease in the rate for primary credit at each Federal Reserve Bank. The secondary credit rate at each Reserve Bank automatically decreased by formula as a result of the Board’s primary credit rate action.

DATES:

Effective date: The amendments to part 201 (Regulation A) are effective March 10, 2020.

Applicability date: The rate changes for primary and secondary credit were applicable on March 4, 2020.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Sophia H. Allison, Senior Special Counsel (202-452-3565), Legal Division, or Lyle Kumasaka, Lead Financial Institution & Policy Analyst (202-452-2382), or Laura Lipscomb, Assistant Director (202-912-7964), Division of Monetary Affairs; for users of Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) only, contact 202-263-4869; Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, 20th and C Streets NW, Washington, DC 20551.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Federal Reserve Banks make primary and secondary credit available to depository institutions as a backup source of funding on a short-term basis, usually overnight. The primary and secondary credit rates are the interest rates that the twelve Federal Reserve Banks charge for extensions of credit

under these programs. In accordance with the Federal Reserve Act, the primary and secondary credit rates are established by the boards of directors of the Federal Reserve Banks, subject to the review and determination of the Board.

On March 3, 2020, the Board voted to approve a ½ percentage point decrease in the primary credit rate in effect at each of the twelve Federal Reserve Banks, thereby decreasing from 2.25 percent to 1.75 percent the rate that each Reserve Bank charges for extensions of primary credit. In addition, the Board had previously approved the renewal of the secondary credit rate formula, the primary credit rate plus 50 basis points. Under the formula, the secondary credit rate in effect at each of the twelve Federal Reserve Banks decreased by ½ percentage point as a result of the Board’s primary credit rate action, thereby decreasing from 2.75 percent to 2.25 percent the rate that each Reserve Bank charges for extensions of secondary credit. The amendments to Regulation A reflect these rate changes.

The ½ percentage point decrease in the primary credit rate was associated with a ½ percentage point decrease in the target range for the federal funds rate (from a target range of 1½ percent to 1¾ percent to a target range of 1 percent to 1¼ percent) announced by the Federal Open Market Committee on March 3, 2020, as described in the Board’s amendment of its Regulation D published elsewhere in today’s **Federal Register**.

Administrative Procedure Act

In general, the Administrative Procedure Act (“APA”) ¹ imposes three principal requirements when an agency promulgates legislative rules (rules made pursuant to Congressionally-delegated authority): (1) Publication with adequate notice of a proposed rule; (2) followed by a meaningful opportunity for the public to comment on the rule’s content; and (3) publication of the final rule not less than 30 days before its effective date. The APA provides that notice and comment procedures do not apply if the agency for good cause finds them to be “unnecessary, impracticable, or contrary to the public interest.” ² Section 553(d)

of the APA also provides that publication at least 30 days prior to a rule’s effective date is not required for (1) a substantive rule which grants or recognizes an exemption or relieves a restriction; (2) interpretive rules and statements of policy; or (3) a rule for which the agency finds good cause for shortened notice and publishes its reasoning with the rule.³ The APA further provides that the notice, public comment, and delayed effective date requirements of 5 U.S.C. 553 do not apply “to the extent that there is involved . . . a matter relating to agency management or personnel or to public property, *loans*, grants, benefits, or contracts.” ⁴

Regulation A establishes the interest rates that the twelve Reserve Banks charge for extensions of primary credit and secondary credit. The Board has determined that the notice, public comment, and delayed effective date requirements of the APA do not apply to these final amendments to Regulation A. The amendments involve a matter relating to loans and are therefore exempt under the terms of the APA. Furthermore, because delay would undermine the Board’s action in responding to economic data and conditions, the Board has determined that “good cause” exists within the meaning of the APA to dispense with the notice, public comment, and delayed effective date procedures of the APA with respect to the final amendments to Regulation A.

Regulatory Flexibility Analysis

The Regulatory Flexibility Act (“RFA”) does not apply to a rulemaking where a general notice of proposed rulemaking is not required.⁵ As noted previously, a general notice of proposed rulemaking is not required if the final rule involves a matter relating to loans. Furthermore, the Board has determined that it is unnecessary and contrary to the public interest to publish a general notice of proposed rulemaking for this final rule. Accordingly, the RFA’s requirements relating to an initial and final regulatory flexibility analysis do not apply.

³ 5 U.S.C. 553(d).

⁴ 5 U.S.C. 553(a)(2) (emphasis added).

⁵ 5 U.S.C. 603, 604.

¹ 5 U.S.C. 551 *et seq.*

² 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(3)(A).

Paperwork Reduction Act

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (“PRA”) of 1995,⁶ the Board reviewed the final rule under the authority delegated to the Board by the Office of Management and Budget. The final rule contains no requirements subject to the PRA.

12 CFR Chapter II

List of Subjects in 12 CFR Part 201

Banks, Banking, Federal Reserve System, Reporting and recordkeeping.

Authority and Issuance

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

PART 201—EXTENSIONS OF CREDIT BY FEDERAL RESERVE BANKS (REGULATION A)

■ 1. The authority citation for part 201 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 12 U.S.C. 248(i)–(j), 343 *et seq.*, 347a, 347b, 347c, 348 *et seq.*, 357, 374, 374a, and 461.

■ 2. In § 201.51, revise paragraphs (a) and (b) to read as follows:

§ 201.51 Interest rates applicable to credit extended by a Federal Reserve Bank.³

(a) *Primary credit.* The interest rate at each Federal Reserve Bank for primary credit provided to depository institutions under § 201.4(a) is 1.75 percent.

(b) *Secondary credit.* The interest rate at each Federal Reserve Bank for secondary credit provided to depository institutions under § 201.4(b) is 2.25 percent.

* * * * *

By order of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, March 4, 2020.

Michele Taylor Fennell,

Assistant Secretary of the Board.

[FR Doc. 2020-04825 Filed 3-9-20; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6210-01-P

FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

12 CFR Part 204

[Docket No. R-1698]

RIN 7100-AF73

Regulation D: Reserve Requirements of Depository Institutions

AGENCY: Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System (“Board”) is amending Regulation D (Reserve Requirements of Depository Institutions) to revise the rate of interest paid on balances maintained to satisfy reserve balance requirements (“IORR”) and the rate of interest paid on excess balances (“IOER”) maintained at Federal Reserve Banks by or on behalf of eligible institutions. The final amendments specify that IORR is 1.10 percent and IOER is 1.10 percent, a 0.50 percentage point decrease from their prior levels. The amendments are intended to enhance the role of such rates of interest in maintaining the Federal funds rate in the target range established by the Federal Open Market Committee (“FOMC” or “Committee”).

DATES:

Effective date: The amendments to part 204 (Regulation D) are effective March 10, 2020.

Applicability date: The IORR and IOER rate changes were applicable on March 4, 2020.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Sophia H. Allison, Senior Special Counsel (202-452-3565), Legal Division, or Francis Martinez, Senior Financial Institution & Policy Analyst (202-245-4217), or Laura Lipscomb, Assistant Director (202-912-7964), Division of Monetary Affairs; for users of Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) only, contact 202-263-4869; Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, 20th and C Streets NW, Washington, DC 20551.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Statutory and Regulatory Background

For monetary policy purposes, section 19 of the Federal Reserve Act (“Act”) imposes reserve requirements on certain types of deposits and other liabilities of depository institutions.¹ Regulation D, which implements section 19 of the Act, requires that a depository institution meet reserve requirements by holding cash in its vault, or if vault cash is insufficient, by maintaining a balance in

an account at a Federal Reserve Bank (“Reserve Bank”).² Section 19 also provides that balances maintained by or on behalf of certain institutions in an account at a Reserve Bank may receive earnings to be paid by the Reserve Bank at least once each quarter, at a rate or rates not to exceed the general level of short-term interest rates.³ Institutions that are eligible to receive earnings on their balances held at Reserve Banks (“eligible institutions”) include depository institutions and certain other institutions.⁴ Section 19 also provides that the Board may prescribe regulations concerning the payment of earnings on balances at a Reserve Bank.⁵ Prior to these amendments, Regulation D specified a rate of 1.60 percent for both IORR and IOER.⁶

II. Amendments to IORR and IOER

The Board is amending § 204.10(b)(5) of Regulation D to specify that IORR is 1.10 percent and IOER is 1.10 percent. This 0.50 percentage point decrease in each rate was associated with a decrease in the target range for the federal funds rate, from a target range of 1½ to 1¾ percent to a target range of 1 to 1¼ percent, announced by the FOMC on March 3, 2020 with an effective date of March 4, 2020. The FOMC’s press release on the same day as the announcement noted that:

The fundamentals of the U.S. economy remain strong. However, the coronavirus poses evolving risks to economic activity. In light of these risks and in support of achieving its maximum employment and price stability goals, the Federal Open Market Committee decided today to lower the target range for the federal funds rate by ½ percentage point, to 1 to 1¼ percent. The Committee is closely monitoring developments and their implications for the economic outlook and will use its tools and act as appropriate to support the economy.

The Federal Reserve Implementation Note released simultaneously with the announcement stated:

The Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System voted unanimously to set the interest rate paid on required and excess reserve balances at 1.10 percent, effective March 4, 2020.

As a result, the Board is amending § 204.10(b)(5) of Regulation D to change IORR to 1.10 percent and IOER to 1.10 percent.

² 12 CFR 204.5(a)(1).

³ 12 U.S.C. 461(b)(1)(A) & (b)(12)(A).

⁴ See 12 U.S.C. 461(b)(1)(A) & (b)(12)(C); see also 12 CFR 204.2(y).

⁵ See 12 U.S.C. 461(b)(12)(B).

⁶ See 12 CFR 204.10(b)(5).

⁶ 44 U.S.C. 3506; see 5 CFR part 1320 Appendix A.1.

³ The primary, secondary, and seasonal credit rates described in this section apply to both advances and discounts made under the primary, secondary, and seasonal credit programs, respectively.

¹ 12 U.S.C. 461(b).