

ficient funds when the financial<sup>1</sup> institution failed to credit, in accordance with the terms and conditions of an account, a deposit of funds to the consumer's account which would have provided sufficient funds to make the transfer, and

(3) the financial institution's failure to stop payment of a preauthorized transfer from a consumer's account when instructed to do so in accordance with the terms and conditions of the account.

**(b) Acts of God and technical malfunctions**

A financial institution shall not be liable under subsection (a)(1) or (2) of this section if the financial institution shows by a preponderance of the evidence that its action or failure to act resulted from—

(1) an act of God or other circumstance beyond its control, that it exercised reasonable care to prevent such an occurrence, and that it exercised such diligence as the circumstances required; or

(2) a technical malfunction which was known to the consumer at the time he attempted to initiate an electronic fund transfer or, in the case of a preauthorized transfer, at the time such transfer should have occurred.

**(c) Intent**

In the case of a failure described in subsection (a) of this section which was not intentional and which resulted from a bona fide error, notwithstanding the maintenance of procedures reasonably adapted to avoid any such error, the financial institution shall be liable for actual damages proved.

**(d) Exception for damaged notices**

If the notice required to be posted pursuant to section 1693b(d)(3)(B)(i) of this title by an automated teller machine operator has been posted by such operator in compliance with such section and the notice is subsequently removed, damaged, or altered by any person other than the operator of the automated teller machine, the operator shall have no liability under this section for failure to comply with section 1693b(d)(3)(B)(i) of this title.

(Pub. L. 90-321, title IX, §910, as added Pub. L. 95-630, title XX, §2001, Nov. 10, 1978, 92 Stat. 3735; amended Pub. L. 106-102, title VII, §705, Nov. 12, 1999, 113 Stat. 1465; Pub. L. 111-203, title X, §1084(1), July 21, 2010, 124 Stat. 2081.)

AMENDMENTS

2010—Subsec. (a)(1)(E). Pub. L. 111-203 substituted “Bureau” for “Board”.

1999—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 106-102 added subsec. (d).

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2010 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 111-203 effective on the designated transfer date, see section 1100H of Pub. L. 111-203, set out as a note under section 552a of Title 5, Government Organization and Employees.

**§ 1693i. Issuance of cards or other means of access**

**(a) Prohibition; proper issuance**

No person may issue to a consumer any card, code, or other means of access to such consum-

er's account for the purpose of initiating an electronic fund transfer other than—

(1) in response to a request or application therefor; or

(2) as a renewal of, or in substitution for, an accepted card, code, or other means of access, whether issued by the initial issuer or a successor.

**(b) Exceptions**

Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, a person may distribute to a consumer on an unsolicited basis a card, code, or other means of access for use in initiating an electronic fund transfer from such consumer's account, if—

(1) such card, code, or other means of access is not validated;

(2) such distribution is accompanied by a complete disclosure, in accordance with section 1693c of this title, of the consumer's rights and liabilities which will apply if such card, code, or other means of access is validated;

(3) such distribution is accompanied by a clear explanation, in accordance with regulations of the Bureau, that such card, code, or other means of access is not validated and how the consumer may dispose of such code, card, or other means of access if validation is not desired; and

(4) such card, code, or other means of access is validated only in response to a request or application from the consumer, upon verification of the consumer's identity.

**(c) Validation**

For the purpose of subsection (b) of this section, a card, code, or other means of access is validated when it may be used to initiate an electronic fund transfer.

(Pub. L. 90-321, title IX, §911, as added Pub. L. 95-630, title XX, §2001, Nov. 10, 1978, 92 Stat. 3736; amended Pub. L. 111-203, title X, §1084(1), July 21, 2010, 124 Stat. 2081.)

AMENDMENTS

2010—Subsec. (b)(3). Pub. L. 111-203 substituted “Bureau” for “Board”.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2010 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 111-203 effective on the designated transfer date, see section 1100H of Pub. L. 111-203, set out as a note under section 552a of Title 5, Government Organization and Employees.

**§ 1693j. Suspension of obligations**

If a system malfunction prevents the effectuation of an electronic fund transfer initiated by a consumer to another person, and such other person has agreed to accept payment by such means, the consumer's obligation to the other person shall be suspended until the malfunction is corrected and the electronic fund transfer may be completed, unless such other person has subsequently, by written request, demanded payment by means other than an electronic fund transfer.

(Pub. L. 90-321, title IX, §912, as added Pub. L. 95-630, title XX, §2001, Nov. 10, 1978, 92 Stat. 3737.)

<sup>1</sup> So in original. Probably should be “financial”.

**§ 1693k. Compulsory use of electronic fund transfers**

No person may—

(1) condition the extension of credit to a consumer on such consumer's repayment by means of preauthorized electronic fund transfers; or

(2) require a consumer to establish an account for receipt of electronic fund transfers with a particular financial institution as a condition of employment or receipt of a government benefit.

(Pub. L. 90-321, title IX, §913, as added Pub. L. 95-630, title XX, §2001, Nov. 10, 1978, 92 Stat. 3737.)

**§ 1693l. Waiver of rights**

No writing or other agreement between a consumer and any other person may contain any provision which constitutes a waiver of any right conferred or cause of action created by this subchapter. Nothing in this section prohibits, however, any writing or other agreement which grants to a consumer a more extensive right or remedy or greater protection than contained in this subchapter or a waiver given in settlement of a dispute or action.

(Pub. L. 90-321, title IX, §914, as added Pub. L. 95-630, title XX, §2001, Nov. 10, 1978, 92 Stat. 3737.)

**§ 1693l-1. General-use prepaid cards, gift certificates, and store gift cards**

**(a) Definitions**

In this section, the following definitions shall apply:

**(1) Dormancy fee; inactivity charge or fee**

The terms "dormancy fee" and "inactivity charge or fee" mean a fee, charge, or penalty for non-use or inactivity of a gift certificate, store gift card, or general-use prepaid card.

**(2) General use<sup>1</sup> prepaid card, gift certificate, and store gift card**

**(A) General-use prepaid card**

The term "general-use prepaid card" means a card or other payment code or device issued by any person that is—

(i) redeemable at multiple, unaffiliated merchants or service providers, or automated teller machines;

(ii) issued in a requested amount, whether or not that amount may, at the option of the issuer, be increased in value or reloaded if requested by the holder;

(iii) purchased or loaded on a prepaid basis; and

(iv) honored, upon presentation, by merchants for goods or services, or at automated teller machines.

**(B) Gift certificate**

The term "gift certificate" means an electronic promise that is—

(i) redeemable at a single merchant or an affiliated group of merchants that share the same name, mark, or logo;

(ii) issued in a specified amount that may not be increased or reloaded;

(iii) purchased on a prepaid basis in exchange for payment; and

(iv) honored upon presentation by such single merchant or affiliated group of merchants for goods or services.

**(C) Store gift card**

The term "store gift card" means an electronic promise, plastic card, or other payment code or device that is—

(i) redeemable at a single merchant or an affiliated group of merchants that share the same name, mark, or logo;

(ii) issued in a specified amount, whether or not that amount may be increased in value or reloaded at the request of the holder;

(iii) purchased on a prepaid basis in exchange for payment; and

(iv) honored upon presentation by such single merchant or affiliated group of merchants for goods or services.

**(D) Exclusions**

The terms "general-use prepaid card", "gift certificate", and "store gift card" do not include an electronic promise, plastic card, or payment code or device that is—

(i) used solely for telephone services;

(ii) reloadable and not marketed or labeled as a gift card or gift certificate;

(iii) a loyalty, award, or promotional gift card, as defined by the Bureau;

(iv) not marketed to the general public;

(v) issued in paper form only (including for tickets and events); or

(vi) redeemable solely for admission to events or venues at a particular location or group of affiliated locations, which may also include services or goods obtainable—

(I) at the event or venue after admission; or

(II) in conjunction with admission to such events or venues, at specific locations affiliated with and in geographic proximity to the event or venue.

**(3) Service fee**

**(A) In general**

The term "service fee" means a periodic fee, charge, or penalty for holding or use of a gift certificate, store gift card, or general-use prepaid card.

**(B) Exclusion**

With respect to a general-use prepaid card, the term "service fee" does not include a one-time initial issuance fee.

**(b) Prohibition on imposition of fees or charges**

**(1) In general**

Except as provided under paragraphs (2) through (4), it shall be unlawful for any person to impose a dormancy fee, an inactivity charge or fee, or a service fee with respect to a gift certificate, store gift card, or general-use prepaid card.

**(2) Exceptions**

A dormancy fee, inactivity charge or fee, or service fee may be charged with respect to a

<sup>1</sup> So in original. Probably should be "General-use".