

§ 6306. Petition and review**(a) Petition****(1) In general**

A person subject to an order issued under this chapter may file with the Secretary a petition—

(A) stating that the order, any provision of the order, or any obligation imposed in connection with the order is not established in accordance with law; and

(B) requesting a modification of the order or an exemption from the order.

(2) Hearings

The petitioner shall be given the opportunity for a hearing on a petition filed under paragraph (1), in accordance with regulations issued by the Secretary.

(3) Ruling

After a hearing under paragraph (2), the Secretary shall make a ruling on the petition that is the subject of the hearing, which shall be final if such ruling is in accordance with applicable law.

(b) Review**(1) Commencement of action**

The district court of the United States in any district in which the person who is a petitioner under subsection (a) of this section resides or carries on business shall have jurisdiction to review a ruling on the petition of such person under such subsection, if a complaint for that purpose is filed not later than 20 days after the date of the entry of a ruling by the Secretary under such subsection (a) of this section.

(2) Process

Service of process in a proceeding under paragraph (1) shall be conducted in accordance with the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

(3) Remands

If the court determines, under paragraph (1), that a ruling issued under subsection (a)(3) of this section is not in accordance with applicable law, the court shall remand the matter to the Secretary with directions either—

(A) to make such ruling as the court shall determine to be in accordance with law; or

(B) to take such further proceedings as, in the opinion of the court, the law requires.

(4) Enforcement

The pendency of proceedings instituted under subsection (a) of this section shall not impede, hinder, or delay the Attorney General or the Secretary from taking any action under section 6307 of this title.

(Pub. L. 101-624, title XIX, § 1971, Nov. 28, 1990, 104 Stat. 3900.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, referred to in subsec. (b)(2), are set out in the Appendix to Title 28, Judiciary and Judicial Procedure.

§ 6307. Enforcement**(a) Jurisdiction**

The district courts of the United States are vested with jurisdiction specifically to enforce,

and to prevent and restrain any person from violating, any order or regulation made or issued under this chapter.

(b) Referral to Attorney General

A civil action authorized to be commenced under this section shall be referred to the Attorney General for appropriate action, except that the Secretary shall not be required to refer to the Attorney General a violation of this chapter, if the Secretary believes that the administration and enforcement of this chapter would be adequately served by providing a suitable written notice or warning to the person who committed such violation or by administrative action under section 6306 of this title.

(c) Civil penalties and orders**(1) Civil penalties**

Any person who willfully violates any provision of any order or regulation issued by the Secretary under this chapter, or who fails or refuses to pay, collect, or remit any assessment or fee duly required of the person under the order or regulations, may be assessed—

(A) a civil penalty by the Secretary of not more than \$1,000 for each such violation; and

(B) in the case of a willful failure to pay, collect, or remit an assessment as required by the order or regulation, an additional penalty equal to the amount of such assessment.

Each violation shall be a separate offense.

(2) Cease-and-desist orders

In addition to, or in lieu of, a civil penalty under paragraph (1), the Secretary may issue an order requiring a person to cease and desist from continuing any such violation.

(3) Notice and hearing

No penalty shall be assessed or cease-and-desist order issued by the Secretary under this subsection unless the person against whom the penalty is assessed or the order is issued is given notice and opportunity for a hearing before the Secretary with respect to such violation.

(4) Finality

The order of the Secretary assessing a penalty or imposing a cease-and-desist order under this subsection shall be final and conclusive unless the affected person files an appeal of the Secretary's order with the appropriate district court of the United States in accordance with subsection (d) of this section.

(d) Review by district court**(1) Commencement of action**

Any person who has been determined to be in violation of this chapter, or against whom a civil penalty has been assessed or a cease-and-desist order issued under subsection (c) of this section, may obtain review of the penalty or order by—

(A) filing, within the 30-day period beginning on the date the penalty is assessed or order issued, a notice of appeal in—

(i) the district court of the United States for the district in which the person resides or conducts business; or

(ii) the United States District Court for the District of Columbia; and

(B) simultaneously sending a copy of the notice by certified mail to the Secretary.

(2) Record

The Secretary shall file promptly in the appropriate court referred to in paragraph (1), a certified copy of the record on which the Secretary has determined that the person had committed a violation.

(3) Standard of review

A finding of the Secretary under this section shall be set aside only if such finding is found to be unsupported by substantial evidence.

(e) Failure to obey orders

Any person who fails to obey a cease-and-desist order issued under this section after such order has become final and unappealable, or after the appropriate United States district court has entered a final judgment in favor of the Secretary, shall be subject to a civil penalty assessed by the Secretary, after opportunity for a hearing and for judicial review under the procedures specified in subsections (c) and (d) of this section, of not more than \$5,000 for each offense. Each day during which such failure continues shall be considered as a separate violation of such order.

(f) Failure to pay penalties

If any person fails to pay an assessment of a civil penalty under this section after it has become a final and unappealable order, or after the appropriate United States district court has entered final judgment in favor of the Secretary, the Secretary shall refer the matter to the Attorney General for recovery of the amount assessed in the district court in which the person resides or conducts business. In such action, the validity and appropriateness of the final order imposing the civil penalty shall not be subject to review.

(g) Additional remedies

The remedies provided in this chapter shall be in addition to, and not exclusive of, other remedies that may be available.

(Pub. L. 101-624, title XIX, §1972, Nov. 28, 1990, 104 Stat. 3901.)

§ 6308. Investigations and power to subpoena

(a) Investigations

The Secretary may make such investigations as the Secretary considers necessary—

(1) for the effective administration of this chapter; and

(2) to determine whether any person has engaged or is engaging in any act that constitutes a violation of this chapter, or any order, rule, or regulation issued under this chapter.

(b) Subpoenas, oaths, and affirmations

(1) In general

For the purpose of an investigation under subsection (a) of this section, the Secretary may administer oaths and affirmations, and issue a subpoena to require the production of

any records that are relevant to the inquiry. The production of any such records may be required from any place in the United States.

(2) Administrative hearings

For the purpose of an administrative hearing held under section 6306 or 6307 of this title, the presiding officer is authorized to administer oaths and affirmations, subpoena witnesses, compel their attendance, take evidence, and require the production of any records that are relevant to the inquiry. Such attendance of witnesses and the production of any such records may be required from any place in the United States.

(c) Aid of courts

In the case of contumacy by, or refusal to obey a subpoena issued to, any person, the Secretary may invoke the aid of any court of the United States within the jurisdiction of which such investigation or proceeding is carried on, or where such person resides or carries on business, in order to enforce a subpoena issued by the Secretary under subsection (b) of this section. The court may issue an order requiring such person to comply with such a subpoena.

(d) Contempt

Any failure to obey an order of the court under this section may be punished by such court as a contempt thereof.

(e) Process

Process in any such case may be served in the judicial district in which such person resides or conducts business or wherever such person may be found.

(f) Hearing site

The site of any hearings held under section 6306 or 6307 of this title shall be within the judicial district where such person resides or has a principal place of business.

(Pub. L. 101-624, title XIX, §1973, Nov. 28, 1990, 104 Stat. 3902.)

§ 6309. Administrative provisions

(a) Construction

Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, nothing in this chapter may be construed to—

(1) preempt or supersede any other program relating to soybean promotion, research, consumer information, or industry information organized and operated under the laws of the United States or any State; or

(2) authorize the withholding of any information from Congress.

(b) State laws

(1) Referenda on qualified State soybean boards

To ensure the proper administration of this chapter, no State may conduct a referendum relating to the continuation or termination of a qualified State soybean board or State soybean assessment—

(A) during the period beginning on the date an order is issued under section 6303 of this title and ending 18 months after the referendum on such order is conducted under section 6305(a) of this title; or