

TITLE 19 - CUSTOMS DUTIES
CHAPTER 4 - TARIFF ACT OF 1930
SUBTITLE III - ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS
Part V - Enforcement Provisions

§ 1625. Interpretive rulings and decisions; public information

(a) Publication

Within 90 days after the date of issuance of any interpretive ruling (including any ruling letter, or internal advice memorandum) or protest review decision under this chapter with respect to any customs transaction, the Secretary shall have such ruling or decision published in the Customs Bulletin or shall otherwise make such ruling or decision available for public inspection.

(b) Appeals

A person may appeal an adverse interpretive ruling and any interpretation of any regulation prescribed to implement such ruling to a higher level of authority within the Customs Service for de novo review. Upon a reasonable showing of business necessity, any such appeal shall be considered and decided no later than 60 days following the date on which the appeal is filed. The Secretary shall issue regulations to implement this subsection.

(c) Modification and revocation

A proposed interpretive ruling or decision which would—

- (1) modify (other than to correct a clerical error) or revoke a prior interpretive ruling or decision which has been in effect for at least 60 days; or
- (2) have the effect of modifying the treatment previously accorded by the Customs Service to substantially identical transactions;

shall be published in the Customs Bulletin. The Secretary shall give interested parties an opportunity to submit, during not less than the 30-day period after the date of such publication, comments on the correctness of the proposed ruling or decision. After consideration of any comments received, the Secretary shall publish a final ruling or decision in the Customs Bulletin within 30 days after the closing of the comment period. The final ruling or decision shall become effective 60 days after the date of its publication.

(d) Publication of customs decisions that limit court decisions

A decision that proposes to limit the application of a court decision shall be published in the Customs Bulletin together with notice of opportunity for public comment thereon prior to a final decision.

(e) Public information

The Secretary may make available in writing or through electronic media, in an efficient, comprehensive and timely manner, all information, including directives, memoranda, electronic messages and telexes which contain instructions, requirements, methods or advice necessary for importers and exporters to comply with the Customs¹ laws and regulations. All information which may be made available pursuant to this subsection shall be subject to any exemption from disclosure provided by section 552 of title 5.

Footnotes

¹ So in original. Probably should not be capitalized.

(June 17, 1930, ch. 497, title IV, § 625, as added Pub. L. 95–410, title I, § 112, Oct. 3, 1978, 92 Stat. 898; amended Pub. L. 103–182, title VI, § 623, Dec. 8, 1993, 107 Stat. 2186; Pub. L. 104–295, § 21(e)(14), Oct. 11, 1996, 110 Stat. 3531.)

References in Text

The Customs laws, referred to in subsec. (e), are classified generally to this title.

Amendments

1996—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 104–295 made technical amendment to reference in original act which appears in text as reference to “this chapter”.

1993—Pub. L. 103–182 amended section generally. Prior to amendment, section read as follows: “Within 120 days after issuing any precedential decision (including any ruling letter, internal advice memorandum, or protest review decision) under this chapter with respect to any customs transaction, the Secretary shall have such decision published in the Customs Bulletin or shall otherwise make such decision available for public inspection.”

Transfer of Functions

For transfer of functions, personnel, assets, and liabilities of the United States Customs Service of the Department of the Treasury, including functions of the Secretary of the Treasury relating thereto, to the Secretary of Homeland Security, and for treatment of related references, see sections 203 (1), 551 (d), 552 (d), and 557 of Title 6, Domestic Security, and the Department of Homeland Security Reorganization Plan of November 25, 2002, as modified, set out as a note under section 542 of Title 6.

Study and Report Relating to Timeliness of Prospective Rulings

Pub. L. 107–210, div. A, title III, § 335, Aug. 6, 2002, 116 Stat. 978, required the Comptroller General, not later than 1 year after Aug. 6, 2002, to conduct a study and report to committees of Congress on the extent to which the Office of Regulations and Rulings of the Customs Service had made improvements to decrease the time between requests for, and issuance of, prospective rulings relating to the proper classification, valuation, or marking of goods proposed to be imported into the United States.