

by purchasing or selling a security while in possession of material, nonpublic information shall be liable in an action in any court of competent jurisdiction to any person who, contemporaneously with the purchase or sale of securities that is the subject of such violation, has purchased (where such violation is based on a sale of securities) or sold (where such violation is based on a purchase of securities) securities of the same class.

(b) Limitations on liability

(1) Contemporaneous trading actions limited to profit gained or loss avoided

The total amount of damages imposed under subsection (a) shall not exceed the profit gained or loss avoided in the transaction or transactions that are the subject of the violation.

(2) Offsetting disgorgements against liability

The total amount of damages imposed against any person under subsection (a) shall be diminished by the amounts, if any, that such person may be required to disgorge, pursuant to a court order obtained at the instance of the Commission, in a proceeding brought under section 78u(d) of this title relating to the same transaction or transactions.

(3) Controlling person liability

No person shall be liable under this section solely by reason of employing another person who is liable under this section, but the liability of a controlling person under this section shall be subject to section 78t(a) of this title.

(4) Statute of limitations

No action may be brought under this section more than 5 years after the date of the last transaction that is the subject of the violation.

(c) Joint and several liability for communicating

Any person who violates any provision of this chapter or the rules or regulations thereunder by communicating material, nonpublic information shall be jointly and severally liable under subsection (a) with, and to the same extent as, any person or persons liable under subsection (a) to whom the communication was directed.

(d) Authority not to restrict other express or implied rights of action

Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit or condition the right of any person to bring an action to enforce a requirement of this chapter or the availability of any cause of action implied from a provision of this chapter.

(e) Provisions not to affect public prosecutions

This section shall not be construed to bar or limit in any manner any action by the Commission or the Attorney General under any other provision of this chapter, nor shall it bar or limit in any manner any action to recover penalties, or to seek any other order regarding penalties.

(June 6, 1934, ch. 404, title I, § 20A, as added Pub. L. 100-704, § 5, Nov. 19, 1988, 102 Stat. 4680.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This chapter, referred to in subsecs. (a), (c), (d), and (e), was in the original “this title”. See References in Text note set out under section 78a of this title.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section not applicable to actions occurring before Nov. 19, 1988, see section 9 of Pub. L. 100-704 set out as an Effective Date of 1988 Amendment note under section 78o of this title.

§ 78u. Investigations and actions

(a) Authority and discretion of Commission to investigate violations

(1) The Commission may, in its discretion, make such investigations as it deems necessary to determine whether any person has violated, is violating, or is about to violate any provision of this chapter, the rules or regulations thereunder, the rules of a national securities exchange or registered securities association of which such person is a member or a person associated, or, as to any act or practice, or omission to act, while associated with a member, formerly associated with a member, the rules of a registered clearing agency in which such person is a participant, or, as to any act or practice, or omission to act, while a participant, was a participant, the rules of the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board, of which such person is a registered public accounting firm, a person associated with such a firm, or, as to any act, practice, or omission to act, while associated with such firm, a person formerly associated with such a firm, or the rules of the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board, and may require or permit any person to file with it a statement in writing, under oath or otherwise as the Commission shall determine, as to all the facts and circumstances concerning the matter to be investigated. The Commission is authorized in its discretion, to publish information concerning any such violations, and to investigate any facts, conditions, practices, or matters which it may deem necessary or proper to aid in the enforcement of such provisions, in the prescribing of rules and regulations under this chapter, or in securing information to serve as a basis for recommending further legislation concerning the matters to which this chapter relates.

(2) On request from a foreign securities authority, the Commission may provide assistance in accordance with this paragraph if the requesting authority states that the requesting authority is conducting an investigation which it deems necessary to determine whether any person has violated, is violating, or is about to violate any laws or rules relating to securities matters that the requesting authority administers or enforces. The Commission may, in its discretion, conduct such investigation as the Commission deems necessary to collect information and evidence pertinent to the request for assistance. Such assistance may be provided without regard to whether the facts stated in the request would also constitute a violation of the laws of the United States. In deciding

whether to provide such assistance, the Commission shall consider whether (A) the requesting authority has agreed to provide reciprocal assistance in securities matters to the Commission; and (B) compliance with the request would prejudice the public interest of the United States.

(b) Attendance of witnesses; production of records

For the purpose of any such investigation, or any other proceeding under this chapter, any member of the Commission or any officer designated by it is empowered to administer oaths and affirmations, subpoena witnesses, compel their attendance, take evidence, and require the production of any books, papers, correspondence, memoranda, or other records which the Commission deems relevant or material to the inquiry. Such attendance of witnesses and the production of any such records may be required from any place in the United States or any State at any designated place of hearing.

(c) Judicial enforcement of investigative power of Commission; refusal to obey subpoena; criminal sanctions

In case of contumacy by, or refusal to obey a subpoena issued to, any person, the Commission 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 requiring the attendance and testimony of witnesses and the production of books, papers, correspondence, memoranda, and other records. And such court may issue an order requiring such person to appear before the Commission or member or officer designated by the Commission, there to produce records, if so ordered, or to give testimony touching the matter under investigation or in question; and any failure to obey such order of the court may be punished by such court as a contempt thereof. All process in any such case may be served in the judicial district whereof such person is an inhabitant or wherever he may be found. Any person who shall, without just cause, fail or refuse to attend and testify or to answer any lawful inquiry or to produce books, papers, correspondence, memoranda, and other records, if in his power so to do, in obedience to the subpoena of the Commission, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be subject to a fine of not more than \$1,000 or to imprisonment for a term of not more than one year, or both.

(d) Injunction proceedings; authority of court to prohibit persons from serving as officers and directors; money penalties in civil actions; disgorgement

(1) Whenever it shall appear to the Commission that any person is engaged or is about to engage in acts or practices constituting a violation of any provision of this chapter, the rules or regulations thereunder, the rules of a national securities exchange or registered securities association of which such person is a member or a person associated with a member, the rules of a registered clearing agency in which such person is a participant, the rules of the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board, of

which such person is a registered public accounting firm or a person associated with such a firm, or the rules of the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board, it may in its discretion bring an action in the proper district court of the United States, the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, or the United States courts of any territory or other place subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, to enjoin such acts or practices, and upon a proper showing a permanent or temporary injunction or restraining order shall be granted without bond. The Commission may transmit such evidence as may be available concerning such acts or practices as may constitute a violation of any provision of this chapter or the rules or regulations thereunder to the Attorney General, who may, in his discretion, institute the necessary criminal proceedings under this chapter.

(2) **AUTHORITY OF COURT TO PROHIBIT PERSONS FROM SERVING AS OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS.**—In any proceeding under paragraph (1) of this subsection, the court may prohibit, conditionally or unconditionally, and permanently or for such period of time as it shall determine, any person who violated section 78j(b) of this title or the rules or regulations thereunder from acting as an officer or director of any issuer that has a class of securities registered pursuant to section 78l of this title or that is required to file reports pursuant to section 78o(d) of this title if the person's conduct demonstrates unfitness to serve as an officer or director of any such issuer.

(3) CIVIL MONEY PENALTIES AND AUTHORITY TO SEEK DISGORGEMENT.—

(A) **AUTHORITY OF COMMISSION.**—Whenever it shall appear to the Commission that any person has violated any provision of this chapter, the rules or regulations thereunder, or a cease-and-desist order entered by the Commission pursuant to section 78u-3 of this title, other than by committing a violation subject to a penalty pursuant to section 78u-1 of this title, the Commission may bring an action in a United States district court to seek, and the court shall have jurisdiction to—

(i) impose, upon a proper showing, a civil penalty to be paid by the person who committed such violation; and

(ii) require disgorgement under paragraph (7) of any unjust enrichment by the person who received such unjust enrichment as a result of such violation.

(B) AMOUNT OF PENALTY.—

(i) **FIRST TIER.**—The amount of a civil penalty imposed under subparagraph (A)(i) shall be determined by the court in light of the facts and circumstances. For each violation, the amount of the penalty shall not exceed the greater of (I) \$5,000 for a natural person or \$50,000 for any other person, or (II) the gross amount of pecuniary gain to such defendant as a result of the violation.

(ii) **SECOND TIER.**—Notwithstanding clause (i), the amount of a civil penalty imposed under subparagraph (A)(i) for each such violation shall not exceed the greater of (I) \$50,000 for a natural person or \$250,000 for any other person, or (II) the gross amount of pecuniary gain to such defendant as a result

of the violation, if the violation described in subparagraph (A) involved fraud, deceit, manipulation, or deliberate or reckless disregard of a regulatory requirement.

(iii) **THIRD TIER.**—Notwithstanding clauses (i) and (ii), the amount of a civil penalty imposed under subparagraph (A)(i) for each violation described in that subparagraph shall not exceed the greater of (I) \$100,000 for a natural person or \$500,000 for any other person, or (II) the gross amount of pecuniary gain to such defendant as a result of the violation, if—

(aa) the violation described in subparagraph (A) involved fraud, deceit, manipulation, or deliberate or reckless disregard of a regulatory requirement; and

(bb) such violation directly or indirectly resulted in substantial losses or created a significant risk of substantial losses to other persons.

(C) **PROCEDURES FOR COLLECTION.**—

(i) **PAYMENT OF PENALTY TO TREASURY.**—A penalty imposed under this section shall be payable into the Treasury of the United States, except as otherwise provided in section 7246 of this title and section 78u-6 of this title.

(ii) **COLLECTION OF PENALTIES.**—If a person upon whom such a penalty is imposed shall fail to pay such penalty within the time prescribed in the court's order, the Commission may refer the matter to the Attorney General who shall recover such penalty by action in the appropriate United States district court.

(iii) **REMEDY NOT EXCLUSIVE.**—The actions authorized by this paragraph may be brought in addition to any other action that the Commission or the Attorney General is entitled to bring.

(iv) **JURISDICTION AND VENUE.**—For purposes of section 78aa of this title, actions under this paragraph shall be actions to enforce a liability or a duty created by this chapter.

(D) **SPECIAL PROVISIONS RELATING TO A VIOLATION OF A CEASE-AND-DESIST ORDER.**—In an action to enforce a cease-and-desist order entered by the Commission pursuant to section 78u-3 of this title, each separate violation of such order shall be a separate offense, except that in the case of a violation through a continuing failure to comply with the order, each day of the failure to comply shall be deemed a separate offense.

(4) **PROHIBITION OF ATTORNEYS' FEES PAID FROM COMMISSION DISGORGEMENT FUNDS.**—Except as otherwise ordered by the court upon motion by the Commission, or, in the case of an administrative action, as otherwise ordered by the Commission, funds disgorged under paragraph (7) as the result of an action brought by the Commission in Federal court, or as a result of any Commission administrative action, shall not be distributed as payment for attorneys' fees or expenses incurred by private parties seeking distribution of the disgorged funds.

(5) **EQUITABLE RELIEF.**—In any action or proceeding brought or instituted by the Commis-

sion under any provision of the securities laws, the Commission may seek, and any Federal court may grant, any equitable relief that may be appropriate or necessary for the benefit of investors.

(6) **AUTHORITY OF A COURT TO PROHIBIT PERSONS FROM PARTICIPATING IN AN OFFERING OF PENNY STOCK.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—In any proceeding under paragraph (1) against any person participating in, or, at the time of the alleged misconduct who was participating in, an offering of penny stock, the court may prohibit that person from participating in an offering of penny stock, conditionally or unconditionally, and permanently or for such period of time as the court shall determine.

(B) **DEFINITION.**—For purposes of this paragraph, the term "person participating in an offering of penny stock" includes any person engaging in activities with a broker, dealer, or issuer for purposes of issuing, trading, or inducing or attempting to induce the purchase or sale of, any penny stock. The Commission may, by rule or regulation, define such term to include other activities, and may, by rule, regulation, or order, exempt any person or class of persons, in whole or in part, conditionally or unconditionally, from inclusion in such term.

(7) **DISGORGEMENT.**—In any action or proceeding brought by the Commission under any provision of the securities laws, the Commission may seek, and any Federal court may order, disgorgement.

(8) **LIMITATIONS PERIODS.**—

(A) **DISGORGEMENT.**—The Commission may bring a claim for disgorgement under paragraph (7)—

(i) not later than 5 years after the latest date of the violation that gives rise to the action or proceeding in which the Commission seeks the claim occurs; or

(ii) not later than 10 years after the latest date of the violation that gives rise to the action or proceeding in which the Commission seeks the claim if the violation involves conduct that violates—

(I) section 78j(b) of this title;

(II) section 77q(a)(1) of this title;

(III) section 80b-6(1) of this title; or

(IV) any other provision of the securities laws for which scienter must be established.

(B) **EQUITABLE REMEDIES.**—The Commission may seek a claim for any equitable remedy, including for an injunction or for a bar, suspension, or cease and desist order, not later than 10 years after the latest date on which a violation that gives rise to the claim occurs.

(C) **CALCULATION.**—For the purposes of calculating any limitations period under this paragraph with respect to an action or claim, any time in which the person against which the action or claim, as applicable, is brought is outside of the United States shall not count towards the accrual of that period.

(9) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in paragraph (7) may be construed as altering any right that any private party may have to maintain a suit for a violation of this chapter.

(e) Mandamus

Upon application of the Commission the district courts of the United States and the United States courts of any territory or other place subject to the jurisdiction of the United States shall have jurisdiction to issue writs of mandamus, injunctions, and orders commanding (1) any person to comply with the provisions of this chapter, the rules, regulations, and orders thereunder, the rules of a national securities exchange or registered securities association of which such person is a member or person associated with a member, the rules of a registered clearing agency in which such person is a participant, the rules of the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board, of which such person is a registered public accounting firm or a person associated with such a firm, the rules of the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board, or any undertaking contained in a registration statement as provided in subsection (d) of section 78o of this title, (2) any national securities exchange or registered securities association to enforce compliance by its members and persons associated with its members with the provisions of this chapter, the rules, regulations, and orders thereunder, and the rules of such exchange or association, or (3) any registered clearing agency to enforce compliance by its participants with the provisions of the rules of such clearing agency.

(f) Rules of self-regulatory organizations or Board

Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, the Commission shall not bring any action pursuant to subsection (d) or (e) of this section against any person for violation of, or to command compliance with, the rules of a self-regulatory organization or the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board unless it appears to the Commission that (1) such self-regulatory organization or the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board is unable or unwilling to take appropriate action against such person in the public interest and for the protection of investors, or (2) such action is otherwise necessary or appropriate in the public interest or for the protection of investors.

(g) Consolidation of actions; consent of Commission

Notwithstanding the provisions of section 1407(a) of title 28, or any other provision of law, no action for equitable relief instituted by the Commission pursuant to the securities laws shall be consolidated or coordinated with other actions not brought by the Commission, even though such other actions may involve common questions of fact, unless such consolidation is consented to by the Commission.

(h) Access to records

(1) The Right to Financial Privacy Act of 1978 [12 U.S.C. 3401 et seq.] shall apply with respect to the Commission, except as otherwise provided in this subsection.

(2) Notwithstanding section 1105 or 1107 of the Right to Financial Privacy Act of 1978 [12 U.S.C. 3405 or 3407], the Commission may have access to and obtain copies of, or the information contained in financial records of a customer from a

financial institution without prior notice to the customer upon an ex parte showing to an appropriate United States district court that the Commission seeks such financial records pursuant to a subpoena issued in conformity with the requirements of section 19(b)¹ of the Securities Act of 1933, section 21(b) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 [15 U.S.C. 78u(b)], section 42(b) of the Investment Company Act of 1940 [15 U.S.C. 80a-41(b)], or section 209(b) of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940 [15 U.S.C. 80b-9(b)], and that the Commission has reason to believe that—

(A) delay in obtaining access to such financial records, or the required notice, will result in—

- (i) flight from prosecution;
 - (ii) destruction of or tampering with evidence;
 - (iii) transfer of assets or records outside the territorial limits of the United States;
 - (iv) improper conversion of investor assets;
- or
- (v) impeding the ability of the Commission to identify or trace the source or disposition of funds involved in any securities transaction;

(B) such financial records are necessary to identify or trace the record or beneficial ownership interest in any security;

(C) the acts, practices or course of conduct under investigation involve—

- (i) the dissemination of materially false or misleading information concerning any security, issuer, or market, or the failure to make disclosures required under the securities laws, which remain uncorrected; or
- (ii) a financial loss to investors or other persons protected under the securities laws which remains substantially uncompensated; or

(D) the acts, practices or course of conduct under investigation—

- (i) involve significant financial speculation in securities; or
- (ii) endanger the stability of any financial or investment intermediary.

(3) Any application under paragraph (2) for a delay in notice shall be made with reasonable specificity.

(4)(A) Upon a showing described in paragraph (2), the presiding judge or magistrate judge shall enter an ex parte order granting the requested delay for a period not to exceed ninety days and an order prohibiting the financial institution involved from disclosing that records have been obtained or that a request for records has been made.

(B) Extensions of the period of delay of notice provided in subparagraph (A) of up to ninety days each may be granted by the court upon application, but only in accordance with this subsection or section 1109(a), (b)(1), or (b)(2) of the Right to Financial Privacy Act of 1978 [12 U.S.C. 3409(a), (b)(1), or (b)(2)].

(C) Upon expiration of the period of delay of notification ordered under subparagraph (A) or (B), the customer shall be served with or mailed

¹ See References in Text note below.

a copy of the subpoena insofar as it applies to the customer together with the following notice which shall describe with reasonable specificity the nature of the investigation for which the Commission sought the financial records:

“Records or information concerning your transactions which are held by the financial institution named in the attached subpoena were supplied to the Securities and Exchange Commission on (date). Notification was withheld pursuant to a determination by the (title of court so ordering) under section 21(h) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 that (state reason). The purpose of the investigation or official proceeding was (state purpose).”

(5) Upon application by the Commission, all proceedings pursuant to paragraphs (2) and (4) shall be held in camera and the records thereof sealed until expiration of the period of delay or such other date as the presiding judge or magistrate judge may permit.

(6) Repealed. Pub. L. 114-113, div. O, title VII, § 708, Dec. 18, 2015, 129 Stat. 3030.

(7)(A) Following the expiration of the period of delay of notification ordered by the court pursuant to paragraph (4) of this subsection, the customer may, upon motion, reopen the proceeding in the district court which issued the order. If the presiding judge or magistrate judge finds that the movant is the customer to whom the records obtained by the Commission pertain, and that the Commission has obtained financial records or information contained therein in violation of this subsection, other than paragraph (1), it may order that the customer be granted civil penalties against the Commission in an amount equal to the sum of—

- (i) \$100 without regard to the volume of records involved;
- (ii) any out-of-pocket damages sustained by the customer as a direct result of the disclosure; and
- (iii) if the violation is found to have been willful, intentional, and without good faith, such punitive damages as the court may allow, together with the costs of the action and reasonable attorney’s fees as determined by the court.

(B) Upon a finding that the Commission has obtained financial records or information contained therein in violation of this subsection, other than paragraph (1), the court, in its discretion, may also or in the alternative issue injunctive relief to require the Commission to comply with this subsection with respect to any subpoena which the Commission issues in the future for financial records of such customer for purposes of the same investigation.

(C) Whenever the court determines that the Commission has failed to comply with this subsection, other than paragraph (1), and the court finds that the circumstances raise questions of whether an officer or employee of the Commission acted in a willful and intentional manner and without good faith with respect to the violation, the Office of Personnel Management shall promptly initiate a proceeding to determine whether disciplinary action is warranted against the agent or employee who was primarily responsible for the violation. After investigating and considering the evidence submitted, the Of-

fice of Personnel Management shall submit its findings and recommendations to the Commission and shall send copies of the findings and recommendations to the officer or employee or his representative. The Commission shall take the corrective action that the Office of Personnel Management recommends.

(8) The relief described in paragraphs (7) and (10) shall be the only remedies or sanctions available to a customer for a violation of this subsection, other than paragraph (1), and nothing herein or in the Right to Financial Privacy Act of 1978 [12 U.S.C. 3401 et seq.] shall be deemed to prohibit the use in any investigation or proceeding of financial records, or the information contained therein, obtained by a subpoena issued by the Commission. In the case of an unsuccessful action under paragraph (7), the court shall award the costs of the action and attorney’s fees to the Commission if the presiding judge or magistrate judge finds that the customer’s claims were made in bad faith.

(9)(A) The Commission may transfer financial records or the information contained therein to any government authority if the Commission proceeds as a transferring agency in accordance with section 1112 of the Right to Financial Privacy Act of 1978 [12 U.S.C. 3412], except that the customer notice required under section 1112(b) or (c) of such Act [12 U.S.C. 3412(b) or (c)] may be delayed upon a showing by the Commission, in accordance with the procedure set forth in paragraphs (4) and (5), that one or more of subparagraphs (A) through (D) of paragraph (2) apply.

(B) The Commission may, without notice to the customer pursuant to section 1112 or the Right to Financial Privacy Act of 1978 [12 U.S.C. 3412], transfer financial records or the information contained therein to a State securities agency or to the Department of Justice. Financial records or information transferred by the Commission to the Department of Justice or to a State securities agency pursuant to the provisions of this subparagraph may be disclosed or used only in an administrative, civil, or criminal action or investigation by the Department of Justice or the State securities agency which arises out of or relates to the acts, practices, or courses of conduct investigated by the Commission, except that if the Department of Justice or the State securities agency determines that the information should be disclosed or used for any other purpose, it may do so if it notifies the customer, except as otherwise provided in the Right to Financial Privacy Act of 1978 [12 U.S.C. 3401 et seq.], within 30 days of its determination, or complies with the requirements of section 1109 of such Act [12 U.S.C. 3409] regarding delay of notice.

(10) Any government authority violating paragraph (9) shall be subject to the procedures and penalties applicable to the Commission under paragraph (7)(A) with respect to a violation by the Commission in obtaining financial records.

(11) Notwithstanding the provisions of this subsection, the Commission may obtain financial records from a financial institution or transfer such records in accordance with provisions of the Right to Financial Privacy Act of 1978 [12 U.S.C. 3401 et seq.].

(12) Nothing in this subsection shall enlarge or restrict any rights of a financial institution to challenge requests for records made by the Commission under existing law. Nothing in this subsection shall entitle a customer to assert any rights of a financial institution.

(13) Unless the context otherwise requires, all terms defined in the Right to Financial Privacy Act of 1978 [12 U.S.C. 3401 et seq.] which are common to this subsection shall have the same meaning as in such Act.

(i) Information to CFTC

The Commission shall provide the Commodity Futures Trading Commission with notice of the commencement of any proceeding and a copy of any order entered by the Commission against any broker or dealer registered pursuant to section 78o(b)(11) of this title, any exchange registered pursuant to section 78f(g) of this title, or any national securities association registered pursuant to section 78o-3(k) of this title.

(June 6, 1934, ch. 404, title I, §21, 48 Stat. 899; May 27, 1936, ch. 462, §7, 49 Stat. 1379; Pub. L. 91-452, title II, §212, Oct. 15, 1970, 84 Stat. 929; Pub. L. 94-29, §17, June 4, 1975, 89 Stat. 154; Pub. L. 96-433, §§3, 4, Oct. 10, 1980, 94 Stat. 1855, 1858; Pub. L. 98-376, §2, Aug. 10, 1984, 98 Stat. 1264; Pub. L. 100-181, title III, §323, Dec. 4, 1987, 101 Stat. 1259; Pub. L. 100-704, §§3(a)(1), 6(b), Nov. 19, 1988, 102 Stat. 4677, 4681; Pub. L. 101-429, title II, §201, Oct. 15, 1990, 104 Stat. 935; Pub. L. 101-650, title III, §321, Dec. 1, 1990, 104 Stat. 5117; Pub. L. 104-67, title I, §103(b)(2), Dec. 22, 1995, 109 Stat. 756; Pub. L. 106-554, §1(a)(5) [title II, §205(a)(5)], Dec. 21, 2000, 114 Stat. 2763, 2763A-426; Pub. L. 107-204, §3(b)(2), title III, §§305(a)(1), (b), 308(d)(1), title VI, §603(a), July 30, 2002, 116 Stat. 749, 778, 779, 785, 794; Pub. L. 111-203, title IX, §§923(b)(1), 929F(c), (d), (g)(2), 986(a)(3), July 21, 2010, 124 Stat. 1849, 1854, 1855, 1935; Pub. L. 114-113, div. O, title VII, §708, Dec. 18, 2015, 129 Stat. 3030; Pub. L. 116-283, div. F, title LXV, §6501(a), Jan. 1, 2021, 134 Stat. 4625.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This chapter, referred to in subsecs. (a)(1), (b), (d)(1), (3), (e), and (f), was in the original “this title”. See References in Text note set out under section 78a of this title.

This chapter, referred to in subsec. (d)(9), was in the original “this Act” meaning the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, act June 6, 1934, ch. 404. See References in Text note set out under section 78a of this title.

The Right to Financial Privacy Act of 1978, referred to in subsec. (h)(1), (8), (9)(B), (11), and (13), is title XI of Pub. L. 95-630, Nov. 10, 1978, 92 Stat. 3697, which is classified generally to chapter 35 (§3401 et seq.) of Title 12, Banks and Banking. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 3401 of Title 12 and Tables.

Section 19(b) of the Securities Act of 1933, referred to in subsec. (h)(2), was redesignated section 19(c) by Pub. L. 107-204, title I, §108(a)(1), July 30, 2002, 116 Stat. 768, and is classified to section 77s(c) of this title.

Section 21(h) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, referred to in the paragraph within quotation marks following subsec. (h)(4)(C), is classified to subsection (h) of this section.

AMENDMENTS

2021—Subsec. (d)(3). Pub. L. 116-283, §6501(a)(1)(A), substituted “Civil money penalties and authority to

seek disgorgement” for “Money Penalties in Civil Actions” in heading. Amendment was executed to reflect the probable intent of Congress due to minor errors in formatting of quoted text.

Subsec. (d)(3)(A). Pub. L. 116-283, §6501(a)(1)(B), substituted “jurisdiction to—” and cls. (i) and (ii) for “jurisdiction to impose, upon a proper showing, a civil penalty to be paid by the person who committed such violation.”

Subsec. (d)(3)(B)(i). Pub. L. 116-283, §6501(a)(1)(C)(i), substituted “a civil penalty imposed under subparagraph (A)(i)” for “the penalty” in first sentence.

Subsec. (d)(3)(B)(ii). Pub. L. 116-283, §6501(a)(1)(C)(ii), substituted “amount of a civil penalty imposed under subparagraph (A)(i)” for “amount of penalty”.

Subsec. (d)(3)(B)(iii). Pub. L. 116-283, §6501(a)(1)(C)(iii), substituted “amount of a civil penalty imposed under subparagraph (A)(i) for each violation described in that subparagraph” for “amount of penalty for each such violation” in introductory provisions.

Subsec. (d)(4). Pub. L. 116-283, §6501(a)(2), inserted “under paragraph (7)” after “funds disgorged”.

Subsec. (d)(7) to (9). Pub. L. 116-283, §6501(a)(3), added pars. (7) to (9).

2015—Subsec. (h)(6). Pub. L. 114-113 struck out par. (6) which read as follows: “The Commission shall compile an annual tabulation of the occasions on which the Commission used each separate subparagraph or clause of paragraph (2) of this subsection or the provisions of the Right to Financial Privacy Act of 1978 to obtain access to financial records of a customer and include it in its annual report to the Congress. Section 1121(b) of the Right to Financial Privacy Act of 1978 shall not apply with respect to the Commission.”

2010—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 111-203, §929F(g)(2), in first sentence, substituted “, a person associated with such a firm, or, as to any act, practice, or omission to act, while associated with such firm, a person formerly associated with such a firm” for “or a person associated with such a firm”.

Pub. L. 111-203, §929F(c), (d), in first sentence, inserted “, or, as to any act or practice, or omission to act, while associated with a member, formerly associated” after “member or a person associated” and “or, as to any act or practice, or omission to act, while a participant, was a participant,” after “in which such person is a participant.”

Subsec. (d)(3)(C)(i). Pub. L. 111-203, §923(b)(1), inserted “and section 78u-6 of this title” after “section 7246 of this title”.

Subsec. (h)(2). Pub. L. 111-203, §986(a)(3), struck out “section 18(c) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935,” after “section 21(b) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934,”.

2002—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 107-204, §3(b)(2)(A), inserted “the rules of the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board, of which such person is a registered public accounting firm or a person associated with such a firm,” after “is a participant,”.

Subsec. (d)(1). Pub. L. 107-204, §3(b)(2)(B), inserted “the rules of the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board, of which such person is a registered public accounting firm or a person associated with such a firm,” after “is a participant,”.

Subsec. (d)(2). Pub. L. 107-204, §305(a)(1), substituted “unfitness” for “substantial unfitness”.

Subsec. (d)(3)(C)(i). Pub. L. 107-204, §308(d)(1), inserted “, except as otherwise provided in section 7246 of this title” before period at end.

Subsec. (d)(5). Pub. L. 107-204, §305(b), added par. (5).

Subsec. (d)(6). Pub. L. 107-204, §603(a), added par. (6).

Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 107-204, §3(b)(2)(C), inserted “the rules of the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board, of which such person is a registered public accounting firm or a person associated with such a firm,” after “is a participant,”.

Subsec. (f). Pub. L. 107-204, §3(b)(2)(D), inserted “or the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board” after “self-regulatory organization” in two places.

2000—Subsec. (i). Pub. L. 106-554 added subsec. (i).
 1995—Subsec. (d)(4). Pub. L. 104-67 added par. (4).
 1990—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 101-429 designated existing provision as par. (1) and added pars. (2) and (3).

1988—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 100-704, §6(b), designated existing provisions as par. (1) and added par. (2).

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 100-704, §3(a)(1), redesignated par. (1) as entire subsec. (d) and struck out par. (2) which provided civil penalties for purchasing or selling securities while in possession of material nonpublic information.

1987—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 100-181, §323(1), substituted “Whenever” for “Wherever”.

Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 100-181, §323(2), struck out “, the United States District Court for the District of Columbia,” after “the district courts of the United States”.

Subsec. (g). Pub. L. 100-181, §323(3), struck out “The term ‘securities laws’ as used herein and in subsection (h) of this section includes the Securities Act of 1933 (15 U.S.C. 77a et seq.), the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78a et seq.), the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 (15 U.S.C. 79 et seq.), the Trust Indenture Act of 1939 (15 U.S.C. 77aaa et seq.), the Investment Company Act of 1940 (15 U.S.C. 80a-1 et seq.), the Investment Advisers Act of 1940 (15 U.S.C. 80b-1 et seq.), and the Securities Investor Protection Act of 1970 (15 U.S.C. 78aaaa et seq.).” See 15 U.S.C. 78c(a)(47).

1984—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 98-376 designated existing provisions as par. (1) and added par. (2).

1980—Subsec. (g). Pub. L. 96-433, §4, inserted “and in subsection (h) of this section.”

Subsec. (h). Pub. L. 96-433, §3, added subsec. (h).

1975—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 94-29, §17(1), expanded the Commission’s power to conduct investigations to include violations of the rules of a national securities exchange, registered securities association, registered clearing agency, or the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board.

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 94-29, §17(2), redesignated subsec. (e) as (d) and amended it generally, substituting “has engaged, is engaged, or is about to engage” for “is engaged or about to engage”, “any provision” for “the provisions”, “the rules or regulations” for “or of any rule or regulation”, and “such a showing” for “a proper showing”, and inserting “the rules of a national securities exchange or registered securities association of which such persons is a member or a person associated with a member, the rules of a registered clearing agency in which such person is a participant, or the rules of the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board,” in first sentence and inserting “as may constitute a violation of any provision of this chapter or the rules or regulations thereunder” in second sentence. Former subsec. (d) was repealed by Pub. L. 91-452. See 1970 Amendment note below.

Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 94-29, §17(2), redesignated subsec. (f) as (e) and amended it generally, substituting “mandamus, injunctions, and orders commanding (1) any person to comply with the provisions of this chapter, the rules, regulations, and orders thereunder, the rules of a national securities exchange or registered securities association of which such person is a member or person associated with a member, the rules of a registered clearing agency in which such person is a participant, the rules of the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board, or any undertaking contained in a registration statement as provided in subsection (d) of section 78o of this title” for “mandamus commanding any person to comply with the provisions of this chapter or any order of the Commission made in pursuance thereof or with any undertaking contained in a registration statement as provided in subsection (d) of section 78o of this title” and adding cls. (2) and (3). Former subsec. (e) redesignated (d).

Subsecs. (f), (g). Pub. L. 94-29, §17(3), added subsecs. (f) and (g). Former subsec. (f) redesignated (e).

1970—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 91-452 struck out subsec. (d) which related to immunity from prosecution of any individual compelled to testify or produce evidence, documentary or otherwise, after claiming his privilege against self-incrimination.

1936—Subsec. (f). Act May 27, 1936, inserted “or with any undertaking contained in a registration statement as provided in subsection (d) of section 78o of this title”.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

CHANGE OF NAME

Words “magistrate judge” substituted for “magistrate” wherever appearing in subsec. (h)(4)(A), (5), (7)(A), (8) pursuant to section 321 of Pub. L. 101-650, set out as a note under section 631 of Title 28, Judiciary and Judicial Procedure.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2021 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 116-283, div. F, title LXV, §6501(b), Jan. 1, 2021, 134 Stat. 4626, provided that: “The amendments made by subsection (a) [amending this section] shall apply with respect to any action or proceeding that is pending on, or commenced on or after, the date of enactment of this Act [Jan. 1, 2021].”

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2010 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 111-203 effective 1 day after July 21, 2010, except as otherwise provided, see section 4 of Pub. L. 111-203, set out as an Effective Date note under section 5301 of Title 12, Banks and Banking.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1995 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 104-67 not to affect or apply to any private action arising under this chapter or title I of the Securities Act of 1933 (15 U.S.C. 77a et seq.), commenced before and pending on Dec. 22, 1995, see section 108 of Pub. L. 104-67, set out as a note under section 77l of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1990 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 101-429 effective Oct. 15, 1990, with provisions relating to civil penalties and accounting and disgorgement, see section 1(c)(1), (2) of Pub. L. 101-429, set out in a note under section 77g of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1988 AMENDMENT

Amendment by section 3(a)(1) of Pub. L. 100-704 not applicable to actions occurring before Nov. 19, 1988, see section 9 of Pub. L. 100-704 set out as a note under section 78o of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1984 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 98-376 effective Aug. 10, 1984, see section 7 of Pub. L. 98-376, set out as a note under section 78c of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1980 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 96-433, §5, Oct. 10, 1980, 94 Stat. 1858, provided that:

“(a) The amendments made by section 1 of this Act [amending section 78fff-3 of this title] shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act [Oct. 10, 1980].

“(b) The amendments made by sections 2, 3, and 4 of this Act [amending this section and section 3422 of Title 12, Banks and Banking] shall take effect on November 10, 1980. Nothing in this Act [amending this section and section 78fff-3 of this title and section 3422 of Title 12] or in the Right to Financial Privacy Act of 1978 [12 U.S.C. 3401 et seq.] shall apply to any Securities and Exchange Commission subpoena issued prior to such date.”

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1975 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 94-29 effective June 4, 1975, see section 31(a) of Pub. L. 94-29, set out as a note under section 78b of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1970 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 91-452 effective on sixtieth day following Oct. 15, 1970, see section 260 of Pub. L.

91-452, set out as an Effective Date; Savings Provision note under section 6001 of Title 18, Crimes and Criminal Procedure.

SAVINGS PROVISION

Amendment by Pub. L. 91-452 not to affect any immunity to which any individual is entitled under this section by reason of any testimony given before the sixtieth day following Oct. 15, 1970, see section 260 of Pub. L. 91-452, set out as an Effective Date; Savings Provision note under section 6001 of Title 18, Crimes and Criminal Procedure.

CONSTRUCTION OF 1995 AMENDMENT

Nothing in amendment by Pub. L. 104-67 to be deemed to create or ratify any implied right of action, or to prevent Commission, by rule or regulation, from restricting or otherwise regulating private actions under this chapter, see section 203 of Pub. L. 104-67, set out as a Construction note under section 78j-1 of this title.

PROMOTION OF RECIPROCAL SUBPOENA ENFORCEMENT

Pub. L. 105-353, title I, §102, Nov. 3, 1998, 112 Stat. 3233, provided that:

“(a) COMMISSION ACTION.—The Securities and Exchange Commission, in consultation with State securities commissions (or any agencies or offices performing like functions), shall seek to encourage the adoption of State laws providing for reciprocal enforcement by State securities commissions of subpoenas issued by another State securities commission seeking to compel persons to attend, testify in, or produce documents or records in connection with an action or investigation by a State securities commission of an alleged violation of State securities laws.

“(b) REPORT.—Not later than 24 months after the date of enactment of this Act [Nov. 3, 1998], the Securities and Exchange Commission (hereafter in this section referred to as the ‘Commission’) shall submit a report to the Congress—

“(1) identifying the States that have adopted laws described in subsection (a);

“(2) describing the actions undertaken by the Commission and State securities commissions to promote the adoption of such laws; and

“(3) identifying any further actions that the Commission recommends for such purposes.”

Executive Documents

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

For transfer of functions of Securities and Exchange Commission, with certain exceptions, to Chairman of such Commission, see Reorg. Plan No. 10 of 1950, §§1, 2, eff. May 24, 1950, 15 F.R. 3175, 64 Stat. 1265, set out under section 78d of this title.

§ 78u-1. Civil penalties for insider trading

(a) Authority to impose civil penalties

(1) Judicial actions by Commission authorized

Whenever it shall appear to the Commission that any person has violated any provision of this chapter or the rules or regulations thereunder by purchasing or selling a security or security-based swap agreement while in possession of material, nonpublic information in, or has violated any such provision by communicating such information in connection with, a transaction on or through the facilities of a national securities exchange or from or through a broker or dealer, and which is not part of a public offering by an issuer of securities other than standardized options or security futures products, the Commission—

(A) may bring an action in a United States district court to seek, and the court shall

have jurisdiction to impose, a civil penalty to be paid by the person who committed such violation; and

(B) may, subject to subsection (b)(1), bring an action in a United States district court to seek, and the court shall have jurisdiction to impose, a civil penalty to be paid by a person who, at the time of the violation, directly or indirectly controlled the person who committed such violation.

(2) Amount of penalty for person who committed violation

The amount of the penalty which may be imposed on the person who committed such violation shall be determined by the court in light of the facts and circumstances, but shall not exceed three times the profit gained or loss avoided as a result of such unlawful purchase, sale, or communication.

(3) Amount of penalty for controlling person

The amount of the penalty which may be imposed on any person who, at the time of the violation, directly or indirectly controlled the person who committed such violation, shall be determined by the court in light of the facts and circumstances, but shall not exceed the greater of \$1,000,000, or three times the amount of the profit gained or loss avoided as a result of such controlled person's violation. If such controlled person's violation was a violation by communication, the profit gained or loss avoided as a result of the violation shall, for purposes of this paragraph only, be deemed to be limited to the profit gained or loss avoided by the person or persons to whom the controlled person directed such communication.

(b) Limitations on liability

(1) Liability of controlling persons

No controlling person shall be subject to a penalty under subsection (a)(1)(B) unless the Commission establishes that—

(A) such controlling person knew or recklessly disregarded the fact that such controlled person was likely to engage in the act or acts constituting the violation and failed to take appropriate steps to prevent such act or acts before they occurred; or

(B) such controlling person knowingly or recklessly failed to establish, maintain, or enforce any policy or procedure required under section 78o(f)¹ of this title or section 80b-4a of this title and such failure substantially contributed to or permitted the occurrence of the act or acts constituting the violation.

(2) Additional restrictions on liability

No person shall be subject to a penalty under subsection (a) solely by reason of employing another person who is subject to a penalty under such subsection, unless such employing person is liable as a controlling person under paragraph (1) of this subsection. Section 78t(a) of this title shall not apply to actions under subsection (a) of this section.

(c) Authority of Commission

The Commission, by such rules, regulations, and orders as it considers necessary or appro-

¹ See References in Text note below.