

Understanding the Code of Federal Regulations – Quick Tips

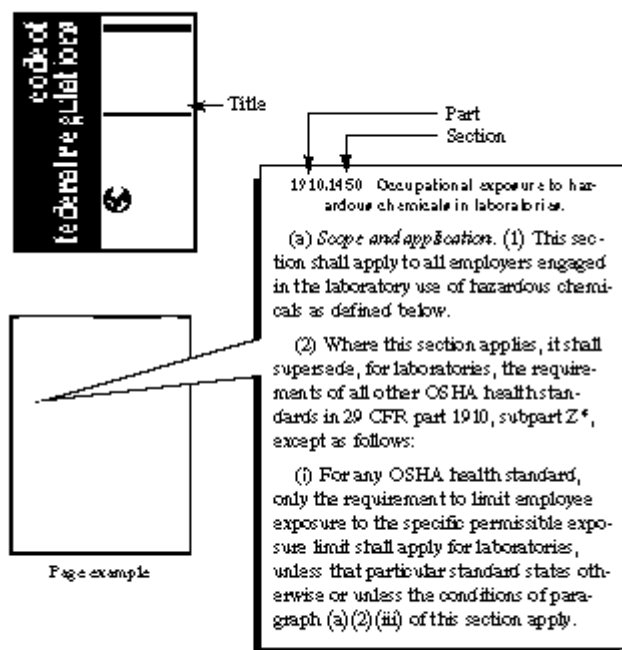


Introduction

Under Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal in the 1930s, Congress began delegating more responsibility to federal agencies to create legislation. At the time, there was no centralized system to communicate up-to-date legislation from the executive department or the agencies of the federal government to the public. The Federal Register Act (1935) and the Administrative Procedure Act (1946) paved the way for the Federal Register System to issue and publish government laws.

Federal Register System

The Federal Register System's two major publications are the Federal Register and the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). The Federal Register is published and issued every federal working day. Legislation is published first as a proposed rule followed by a comment period. The comment period is a time the public can give their input on the proposed rule. Once the rule is finalized, it becomes a legal document a minimum of 30 days after publication in the Federal Register. These final rules are then codified and published annually in the CFR. The Federal Register and the CFR must be used together to determine an up-to-date stipulation of a ruling.



Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Structure

Sometimes it requires a little research to obtain information from the CFRs. A typical OSHA reference may include the title, part, section, paragraph and subparagraph numbers. For example, 29 CFR 1910.1450(a)(2)(i), reads as Title 29, CFR, Part 1910, Section 1450, Paragraph (a), Subparagraph (2) (i). To help you better understand the organization of the CFRs, the following is an excerpt from 29 CFR 1910.1450:

CFR Unit	CFR Designation	Description
Title	29	Numbers range from 1-50.
Part	1910	Specific subject of a single agency.
Section	.1450	Always includes part number, set off by a period.
Paragraph	(a)	Level 1 (a), (b), (c), etc.
Subparagraph	(2)	Level 2 (1), (2), (3), etc.
	(i)	Level 3 (i), (ii), (iii), etc.
		Level 4 (A), (B), (C) or (a), (b), (c)
		Level 5 (1), (2), (3), etc.
		Level 6 (i), (ii), (iii), etc.
		Indented within section, six structure all levels possible.

*Subparts (expressed with capital letters) group related sections within a part. For example: 29 CFR, Subpart Z—Toxic and Hazardous Substances includes 29 CFR 1910.1000 through 29 CFR 1910.1500. These are often used when referring to cumulative references of a regulation.

Code of Federal Regulations Title Numbers and Descriptions

Each regulation falls under one of these 50 title numbers and subject areas:

1. General Provisions
2. Grants and Agreements

3. The President
4. Accounts
5. Administrative Personnel
6. Homeland Security
7. Agriculture
8. Aliens and Nationality
9. Animals and Animal Products
10. Energy
11. Federal Elections
12. Banks and Banking
13. Business Credit and Assistance
14. Aeronautics and Space
15. Commerce and Foreign Trade
16. Commercial Practices
17. Commodity and Securities Exchanges
18. Conservation of Power and Water Resources
19. Customs Duties
20. Employees' Benefits
21. Food and Drugs
22. Foreign Relations
23. Highways
24. Housing and Urban Development
25. Indians
26. Internal Revenue
27. Alcohol, Tobacco Products and Firearms
28. Judicial Administration
29. Labor-OSHA
30. Mineral Resources
31. Money and Finance: Treasury
32. National Defense
33. Navigation and Navigable Waters
34. Education
35. (Reserved)
36. Parks, Forests, and Public Property
37. Patents, Trademarks, and Copyrights
38. Pensions, Bonuses and Veterans' Relief
39. Postal Service
40. Protection of Environment-EPA
41. Public Contracts and Property Management
42. Public Health
43. Public Lands: Interior
44. Emergency Management and Assistance
45. Public Welfare
46. Shipping
47. Telecommunication
48. Federal Acquisition Regulations System
49. Transportation-DOT
50. Wildlife and Fisheries

For quick reference, the color of the book covers changes annually. The revision date indicates when the revision is begun, and the CFR may not be available to the public for approximately six months after the revision date. The titles are revised and published annually by the following schedule:

Title	Revised as of:
Titles 1–16	January 1st
Titles 17–27	April 1st
Titles 28–41	July 1st
Titles 42–50	October 1st

Index and Finding Aids

When researching by topic, the **Index and Finding Aids** found in the back of each CFR (and also published annually as a separate document) will be helpful. If you are trying to find up-to-date legislation or amendments on a regulation, you may need to consult the **List of CFR Sections Affected (LSA)**, which is issued monthly by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office.

Commonly Asked Questions

Q: Can I publish material that includes CFR references?

A: Yes. The CFRs are public domain and no restrictions are placed on publication of the contents.

Q: Why are the reference numbers confusing?

A: The CFR format uses a period to separate the part number from the section number (instead of a decimal system), so “29 CFR 1910.2” would precede “29 CFR 1910.15.” Also, the many paragraph structural levels mix numerals and letters and include the use of lower case “a” proceeding capital “A” which is an unusual sequence.

Q: What are some examples of employees requiring hazmat training?

A: Employees who:

- Determine if a material is a hazardous material
- Design, produce and/or sell packaging for hazardous materials
- Determine proper packaging for hazardous materials
- Put hazardous materials into packaging
- Mark and/or label hazardous materials packages
- Fill out shipping papers for hazardous materials
- Load or unload hazardous materials
- Operate vehicles that transport hazardous materials

Sources

Superintendent of Documents
Mail OP: SSOP
Washington, DC 20402-9328

Government Printing Office: www.gpoaccess.gov

The Federal Register: What Is It and How To Use It, Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, June 1995.

Code of Federal Regulations, 29 CFR 1910–end, 1993.

OSHA

GPO Access: Code of Federal Regulations

Electronic Code of Federal Regulations

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