



Department of the Treasury

Financial Crimes Enforcement Network

December 21, 2001

Financial Crimes Enforcement Network Announcement

Re: Effective Date for the Suspicious Activity Reporting Requirement for Money Services Businesses Remains January 1, 2002

The U.S. Department of the Treasury is announcing that the January 1, 2002 date on which certain money services businesses (MSBs) become subject to the suspicious activity reporting requirement under the Bank Secrecy Act will, remain in effect. The rule requires that money transmitters, and issuers, sellers, and redeemers of money orders and traveler's checks report suspicious activity occurring on or after January 1, 2002. The report must be filed no later than 30 calendar days from the date the suspicious activity is detected by the MSB. A notice will be published in the Federal Register, according with their schedule, announcing that there is no change to the final rule that was published in March 2000.

Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) is developing a form to be used solely by money transmitters and issuers, sellers and redeemers of money orders and traveler's checks to report suspicious transactions. In the interim, these MSBs are to use the existing bank SAR form, TD F 90-22.47, to report suspicious activities. MSBs should write the letters "MSB" in block print at the top of the form and in the open space in item 5 of the form to distinguish it from reports filed by depository institutions. The form must be filed with the IRS Detroit Computing Center at the address printed on the form. The form will be available at FinCEN's recently launched website for MSBs - www.msb.gov. FinCEN will continue development of practical guidance materials. During this interim period, MSBs are expected to demonstrate good faith, reasonable efforts to comply with the reporting pale.

MSBs are also encouraged to continue using the Financial Institutions Hotline that has been established to report terrorist-related suspicious activity in as expedited manner. The number is **1-866-556-3974**. The purpose of the Hotline is to facilitate immediate transmittal of information to law enforcement. The use of the Hotline is voluntary and does not negate the responsibility of an MSB to file a SAR form.

The SAR rule is the second of two new requirements affecting MSBs. Certain MSBs must also register with FinCEN by December 31, 2001.

FinCEN is continuing with its extensive outreach program to the MSB community and has taken several steps to help inform MSBs about the requirements and how to comply. In addition to the new website, which includes relevant statutes and regulations, the registration form, and explanations of the new rules, thousands of MSBs across the country are being contacted by FinCEN regarding these new requirements and guidance materials are being provided.

FinCEN is also working with relevant trade associations and corporations and will be providing MSBs with the opportunity to order or download free educational materials, including an information packet, a poster, and a training brochure. Plans are underway to continue education and outreach efforts over the course of the next year.

For more information on the MSB registration and suspicious activity reporting requirements or other Bank Secrecy Act requirements applicable to MSBs, businesses and others may refer to www.msb.gov or contact the DCC Hotline at 1-800--800-2877 and press 3.