

owner, has control of the bond. The primary owner may give the secondary owner the right to view or the right to conduct transactions in the bond, and may at any time revoke any rights given. The primary owner may remove the secondary owner without the consent of the secondary owner.

The single owner and owner with beneficiary forms of registration are identical to the registrations offered currently in definitive Series EE savings bonds.

The book-entry Series EE savings bond may be transferred from one New Treasury Direct account to another in order to give a gift (or in response to a final judgment, court order, divorce decree, or a property settlement agreement). The owner of the bond must certify online that the transfer is for the purpose of a gift or for one of the specified exceptions.

A book-entry Series EE savings bond may also be purchased as an irrevocable gift. The purchaser may deliver a gift bond to the account of the intended recipient immediately upon issue, or the purchaser may hold the bond until the purchaser chooses to deliver the bond to the intended recipient.

When transferred or delivered to the recipient, the gift bond will be transferred or delivered in the single owner form of registration to the owner named on the gift bond.

The limitation on purchases for book-entry Series EE savings bonds is \$30,000 per person per calendar year for bonds purchased by the account owner. Bonds purchased as gifts are included in the amount limitation of the recipient when delivered. Book-entry Series EE savings bonds may be purchased in a minimum amount of \$25, with one-cent increments above that amount per transaction. Book-entry bonds may be redeemed or transferred as a gift (or transferred pursuant to other permitted transfers) in an amount of \$25 or greater redemption value.

The provisions relating to judicial proceedings are consistent with those governing definitive Series EE savings bonds. However, the primary owner with secondary owner form of registration for book-entry Series EE savings bonds mandates that some issues be treated differently. In the primary owner with secondary owner form of registration, the secondary owner has no right to redeem unless the primary owner gives him or her that right, and the right is revocable at any time. Thus, for purposes of judicial proceedings, a secondary owner is treated the same as a beneficiary.

We revised the governing regulations for all series of savings bonds and

savings notes to streamline the procedures for handling decedents' estates. The change will provide a survivors' order of precedence that will permit a specified person to redeem or reissue savings bonds owned by a decedent on behalf of all persons entitled under state law, if the estate has not been administered, and if the redemption value of the bonds does not exceed \$100,000. This change will provide consistency in the processing of bonds belonging to decedents' estates among all series of bonds and between definitive bonds and book-entry bonds. The previous regulations for savings bonds (except Series I) and savings notes provided for a similar survivors' order of precedence, but had a much lower amount limitation. The previous regulations for Series I savings bonds contained a slightly different version of the survivors' order of precedence.

Procedural Requirements

This final rule does not meet the criteria for a "significant regulatory action" as defined in Executive Order 12866. Therefore, the regulatory review procedures contained therein do not apply.

This final rule relates to matters of public contract and procedures for United States securities. The notice and public procedures requirements and delayed effective date requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act are inapplicable, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(a)(2).

As no notice of proposed rulemaking is required, the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601, *et seq.*) does not apply.

We ask for no new collections of information in this final rule. Therefore, the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3507) does not apply.

List of Subjects

31 CFR Part 315

Banks and banking, Government securities, Federal reserve system.

31 CFR Part 351

Bonds, Federal Reserve system, Government securities.

31 CFR Part 353

Banks and banking, Government securities, Federal reserve system.

31 CFR Part 359

Bonds, Federal Reserve system, Government securities, Securities.

31 CFR Part 360

Bonds.

31 CFR Part 363

Bonds, Electronic funds transfer, Federal Reserve system, Government securities, Securities.

■ Accordingly, for the reasons set out in the preamble, 31 CFR chapter II, subchapter B, is amended as follows:

PART 315—REGULATIONS GOVERNING U.S. SAVINGS BONDS, SERIES A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, J, AND K, AND U.S. SAVINGS NOTES

■ 1. The authority citation for part 315 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 31 U.S.C. 3105 and 5 U.S.C. 301.

■ 2. Revise § 315.71 to read as follows:

§ 315.71 Decedent's estate.

(a) *Estate is being administered.* (1) Appropriate proof of appointment will be required for the legal representative of the estate. Letters of appointment must be dated within one year of submission.

(2) The bonds will be registered in the following form: "John Doe, SSN 123-45-6789, Legal Representative of the estate of James Doe, deceased, SSN 987-65-4321."

(3) The legal representative of the estate may request payment of bonds and held payments belonging to a decedent's estate, to the estate or to the person(s) entitled, or may have the bonds reissued to the person(s) entitled.

(b) *Estate has been settled previously.* If the estate has been previously settled through judicial proceedings, the person(s) entitled may request payment of bonds or may have the bonds reissued to the person(s) entitled. A certified copy of the court-approved final accounting for the estate, the court's decree of distribution, or other appropriate evidence will be required.

(c) *Summary administration procedures.* If there is no formal administration and no representative of the estate is to be appointed, the person(s) entitled under state law summary or small estates procedures may request payment of bonds or may have the bonds reissued to the person(s) entitled. Appropriate evidence is required.

(d) *Survivors' order of precedence for payment or reissue.* Estates with bonds over \$100,000 redemption value must be administered. If there has been no administration, no administration is pending or contemplated, no summary or small estate procedures have been used, and the redemption value of the bonds is \$100,000 or less, then bonds may be paid or reissued to the persons