Service Date: September 29, 2026

BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

In the Matter of a Penalty Assessment Against STROK INDUSTRIES LLC in the amount of $4,500.	DOCKET TV-260644 ORDER 01 GRANTING MITIGATION, IN PART, IMPOSING AND SUSPENDING PENALTIES

BACKGROUND

1 On September 8, 2026, the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) assessed a $4,500 penalty (Penalty Assessment) against Strok Industries LLC (Strok Industries or Company). The Penalty Assessment was based on violations of Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 480-15-555, which governs criminal background checks for prospective employees, and WAC 480-15-560, which establishes vehicle and driver safety requirements. WAC 480-15-560 also adopts Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (49 C.F.R.), Part 391, Qualifications of Drivers, and Part 395 - Hours of Service of Drivers. Each of the violations at issue in this Docket are as follows:

- **Eleven violations of WAC 480-15-555(1) - Failure to complete a criminal background check for every person the carrier intends to hire**. Strok Industries failed to complete a criminal background check for every person the carrier intended to hire. The Commission assessed a penalty of $100 for each of the eleven occurrences of this first-time critical-type violation, for a total of $1,100.

- **Thirty-two violations of 49 C.F.R. § 391.45(a) – Using a driver not medically examined and certified**. Strok Industries allowed driver Aliaksandr Strok to operate a motor vehicle without a valid medical certificate on 32 occasions between January 13, 2026, and June 10, 2026. The Commission assessed a penalty of $100 for each of the 32 critical-type violations, for a total of $3,200.

- **One violation of 49 C.F.R. § 391.51(a) – Failing to maintain driver qualification file on each driver employed**. Strok Industries failed to

maintain a driver qualification file for driver Aliaksandr Strok. The Commission assessed a penalty of $100 for this critical-type violation.

- **Nine violations of 49 C.F.R. § 395.8(a)(1) – Failing to require a driver to prepare a record duty status using the appropriate method.** Strok Industries failed to require driver Aliaksandr Strok to prepare a record of duty status on nine occasions in May 2026. The Commission assessed a "per category" penalty of $100 for this critical violation.

2 On September 14, 2026, the presiding administrative law judge (ALJ), Amy Bonfrisco, issued a Notice Cancelling the Brief Adjudicative Proceeding set for September 15, 2026, after Strok Industries informed Commission staff (Staff) and ALJ Bonfrisco in an email, dated September 14, 2026, of its intent to voluntarily cancel its household goods carrier permit.[1]

3 On September 16, 2026, Strok Industries filed its request to voluntarily cancel its permit. On that same date, Staff confirmed receipt of the request, canceled Strok Industries' permit THG071581, dismissed the Company's permanent application TV-250050, and notified Strok Industries that all operations associated with the permit must cease.[2]

4 On September 17, 2026, Strok Industries filed a request for mitigation of penalties. In its request for mitigation, Strok Industries admits that the violations alleged in the Penalty Assessment occurred and states that "the violations were not intentional," and that it "did not fully understand all the applicable safety and record keeping requirements."[3] The Company further provides a summary of the corrective actions it took to bring its operations into compliance.

5 On September 25, 2026, Staff filed a response recommending that the original penalty of $4,500 be mitigated to $2,900 and that $1,450 of the reduced penalty be suspended for two years and then waived, subject to the conditions that: (1) Strok Industries does not incur repeat violations of critical regulation; and (2) Strok Industries pays the $1,450 portion of the penalty that is not suspended.[4]

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[1] Docket TV-260762, Strok Industries' Request for Voluntary Cancellation (September 16, 2026).

[2] Docket TV-260762, Staff's Delegated Letter (September 16, 2026).

[3] Docket TV-260644, Strok Industries' Request for Mitigation (September 16, 2026).

[4] Docket TV-260644, Staff's Response and Recommendation at 2 (September 25, 2026).

DISCUSSION AND DECISION

6 The Commission's objective when enforcing statutes, rules, orders, and tariffs is to ensure jurisdictional services are delivered safely, adequately, and efficiently.[5]

7 While there are "a range of procedural options for enforcing Commission statutes, rules, orders, and tariffs,"[6] when determining whether to suspend a portion of a penalty, the Commission will consider the following five factors:

(1) Whether this is a first-time penalty for this or a similar violation.

(2) Whether the company has taken specific actions to remedy the violations and avoid the same or similar violations in the future. Examples include purchasing new technology, making system changes, or training company personnel.

(3) Whether the company agrees to a specific compliance plan that will guarantee future compliance in exchange for suspended penalties.

(4) Whether Staff and the company have agreed that Staff will conduct a follow-up investigation at the end of the suspension period and that if a repeat violation is found, the suspended penalties are re-imposed.

(5) Whether the company can demonstrate other circumstances exist that convince the Commission to suspend the penalties.[7]

8 Additionally, when considering whether an administratively assessed penalty should be mitigated, the Commission assesses:

(1) Whether the company demonstrates that the facts considered by the Commission underlying the assessment were incorrect or do not support the penalty assessed;

(2) Whether the company demonstrates that mitigating information or factors exist that the Commission may not have considered in setting the assessed penalty amount; and

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[5] Docket A-120061, Enforcement Policy for the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission at 6 ¶ 9 (January 7, 2013) (Enforcement Policy).

[6] Enforcement Policy at 10 ¶ 17.

[7] Enforcement Policy at 11 ¶ 20.

(3) Whether the company explains other circumstances that convince the Commission that a lesser penalty will be equally or more effective in ensuring compliance by the company with applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.[8]

9 First, we address the corrective actions Strok Industries took for each violation noted in the Penalty Assessment. Next, we turn to Staff's response to each violation by category and then provide our determination.

10 **WAC 480-15-555(1).** The Penalty Assessment imposes $100 penalty for each of Strok Industries' eleven violations for not completing a background check for every person the Company intended to hire. Although Strok Industries created an account with Checkr and provided Staff with a background check for its owner, Aliaksandr Strok, Staff maintains that the Company failed to demonstrate that it corrected the violations identified. Specifically, Staff argues that the Company has not provided background checks for the eleven employees identified in the investigation report because the former employees have either left the state, country, or are otherwise unreachable. Staff therefore recommend no mitigation of the $1,100 penalty. We agree. Each of the eleven occurrences of this violation involved employees hired prior to the Company's permit cancellation, for whom criminal background checks were not completed and cannot now be remedied. Accordingly, we concur with Staff that mitigation is not warranted as to these violations and assess a $1,100 penalty.

11 **49 C.F.R. § 391.45(a)**. The Penalty Assessment imposes a $3,200 penalty for 32 violations of 49 C.F.R. § 391.45(a) for using a driver not medically examined and certified. Here, Strok Industries represented, and Staff confirmed, that the Company provided a valid medical certificate for the driver noted in Staff's investigation report and established a medical record tracking system and calendar reminders to prevent future lapses in medical certification. We find that the Company promptly corrected these first-time violations. We therefore grant Strok Industries request for mitigation as to these violations and adopt Staff's recommendation to reduce the $3,200 penalty to $1,600.

12 **49 C.F.R. § 391.51(a)**. The Penalty Assessment imposes a $100 penalty for one violation of 49 C.F.R. § 391.51, arising from the failure to maintain a driver-qualification file for each employed driver. While Strok Industries states that it completed a driver-qualification file for Strok and understands the applicable requirements for maintaining driver-qualification documentation, Staff maintains that the driver qualification file the Company provided in its proposed safety management plan was incomplete. Staff further asserts that the documentation the Company provided did not demonstrate that the

[8] Enforcement Policy at 10-11 ¶ 19.

violation had been corrected, or that the Company completely understood the regulatory requirements for maintaining a driver's qualification file and thus recommends no reduction of the $100 penalty. Since a complete driver-qualification file under 49 C.F.R. § 391.51 requires carriers to provide documents such as an employment application, medical examiner's certificate, and driving record, for each driver it employs, we agree with Staff that the Company provided incomplete documentation and failed to show that the underlying violations were remedied. Therefore, we adopt Staff's recommendation and assess a $100 penalty.

13 **49 C.F.R. § 395.8(a)(1)**. The Penalty Assessment imposes a "per category" penalty of $100 for the nine occurrences in which Strok Industries failed to require its drivers to prepare a record of duty status using the appropriate method. In its request for mitigation, Strok Industries states that the Company corrected its driver time records and now understands that all applicable working time, including customer-related work, must be properly recorded. The Company also asserts that it has established procedures for maintaining accurate records. In response, Staff maintains that despite acknowledging responsibility for the violations and claiming to have established protocols for maintaining compliance, Strok Industries did not provide an example of a compliant record of duty status. Staff thus recommends no reduction of the $100 penalty. Absent documentation in the record from the Company that demonstrates compliance with this provision, we find that the $100 penalty is warranted.

14 After reviewing each of the above violation categories, the Commission determines that partial mitigation is warranted under the third factor referenced above in paragraph 8. Given that Strok Industries intends to resume operations in approximately one year and voluntarily cancelled its permit to ensure it is fully prepared moving forward, we find that the Company's cooperation, attendance of additional safety trainings, and the fact that the violations were first time violations, all weigh in favor of mitigating the original penalty of $4,500 to $2,900.

15 With respect to suspension of a portion of the mitigated penalty, we find that a lesser penalty will be equally effective in ensuring future compliance by the Company. Therefore, we agree with and adopt Staff's further recommendation that $1,450 of the reduced penalty be suspended for a period of two years, and then waived, provided that:

(1) Strok Industries do not incur repeat violations of critical regulation; and

(2) Strok Industries pays the $1,450 portion of the penalty that is not suspended.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

16 (1) The Commission is an agency of the state of Washington, vested by statute with authority to regulate rates, rules, regulations, and practices of public service companies, including household goods carriers, and has jurisdiction over the parties and subject matter of this proceeding.

17 (2) Strok Industries is a household goods carrier subject to Commission regulation.

18 (3) Strok Industries violated WAC 480-15-555(1) eleven times by failing to complete a criminal background check for every person the Company intended to hire.

19 (4) The Commission should penalize Strok Industries $1,100 for eleven violations of WAC 480-15-555(1).

20 (5) Strok Industries violated 49 C.F.R. § 391.45(a) 32 times by allowing driver Aliaksandr Strok to operate a motor vehicle without a valid medical certificate on 32 occasions between January 13, 2026, and June 10, 2026

21 (6) The Commission should penalize Strok Industries $1,600 for 32 violations of 49 C.F.R. § 391.45(a).

22 (7) Strok Industries violated 49 C.F.R. § 391.51(a) one time by failing to maintain a driver qualification file on each driver employed.

23 (8) The Commission should penalize Strok Industries $100 for one violation of 49 C.F.R. § 391.51(a).

24 (9) Strok Industries violated 49 C.F.R. § 395.8(a)(1) nine times by failing to require a driver to prepare a record of duty status using the appropriate method on nine occasions in May 2026.

25 (10) The Commission should penalize Strok Industries $100 for these critical violations on a "per category" basis.

26 (11) The Commission should suspend a $1,450 portion of the mitigated $2,900 penalty for a period of two years, and then waive it, subject to the conditions outlined in paragraph 15 of this order.

ORDER

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

27 (1) Strok Industries LLC's request for mitigation of the $4,500 penalty is GRANTED, in part, and the penalty is reduced to $2,900.

28 (2) The Commission suspends a $1,450 portion of the penalty for a period of two years, and then waives it, subject to the conditions outlined in paragraph 15 of this order.

29 (3) If Strok Industries LLC fails to satisfy the conditions in paragraph 15 of this order, the suspended portion of the penalty will become immediately due and payable without further Commission order.

DATED at Lacey, Washington, September 29, 2026.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

/s/ *Amy Bonfrisco*
AMY BONFRISCO
Administrative Law Judge

NOTICE TO PARTIES

This is an Initial Order. The action proposed in this Initial Order is not yet effective. If you disagree with this Initial Order and want the Commission to consider your comments, you must take specific action within the time limits outlined below. If you agree with this Initial Order, and you would like the Order to become final before the time limits expire, you may send a letter to the Commission, waiving your right to petition for administrative review.

WAC 480-07-610(7) provides that any party to this proceeding has twenty-one (21) days after the entry of this Initial Order to file a *Petition for Review*. What must be included in any Petition and other requirements for a Petition are stated in WAC 480-07-610(7)(b). WAC 480-07-610(7)(c) states that any party may file a *Response* to a Petition for review within seven (7) days after service of the Petition.

WAC 480-07-830 provides that before entry of a Final Order any party may file a Petition to Reopen a contested proceeding to permit receipt of evidence essential to a decision, but unavailable and not reasonably discoverable at the time of hearing, or for other good and sufficient cause. No Answer to a Petition to Reopen will be accepted for filing absent express notice by the Commission calling for such answer.

RCW 80.01.060(3) provides that an Initial Order will become final without further Commission action if no party seeks administrative review of the Initial Order and if the Commission fails to exercise administrative review on its own motion.

Any Petition or Response must be electronically filed through the Commission's web portal as required by WAC 480-07-140(5). Any Petition or Response filed must also be electronically served on each party of record as required by WAC 480-07-140(1)(b).