

Comptroller of the Currency, Treasury

§ 19.22

to the portion of a notice that constitutes the prayer for relief or proposed order. The answer must set forth affirmative defenses, if any, asserted by the respondent.

(c) *Default*—(1) *Effect of failure to answer*. Failure of a respondent to file an answer required by this section within the time provided constitutes a waiver of his or her right to appear and contest the allegations in the notice. If no timely answer is filed, Enforcement Counsel may file a motion for entry of an order of default. Upon a finding that no good cause has been shown for the failure to file a timely answer, the administrative law judge shall file with the Comptroller a recommended decision containing the findings and the relief sought in the notice. Any final order issued by the Comptroller based upon a respondent's failure to answer is deemed to be an order issued upon consent.

(2) *Effect of failure to request a hearing in civil money penalty proceedings*. If respondent fails to request a hearing as required by law within the time provided, the notice of assessment constitutes a final and unappealable order.

§ 19.20 Amended pleadings.

(a) *Amendments*. The notice or answer may be amended or supplemented at any stage of the proceeding. The respondent must answer an amended notice within the time remaining for the respondent's answer to the original notice, or within ten days after service of the amended notice, whichever period is longer, unless the Comptroller or administrative law judge orders otherwise for good cause.

(b) *Amendments to conform to the evidence*. When issues not raised in the notice or answer are tried at the hearing by express or implied consent of the parties, they will be treated in all respects as if they had been raised in the notice or answer, and no formal amendments are required. If evidence is objected to at the hearing on the ground that it is not within the issues raised by the notice or answer, the administrative law judge may admit the evidence when admission is likely to assist in adjudicating the merits of the action and the objecting party fails to satisfy the administrative law judge

that the admission of such evidence would unfairly prejudice that party's action or defense upon the merits. The administrative law judge may grant a continuance to enable the objecting party to meet such evidence.

[61 FR 20335, May 6, 1996]

§ 19.21 Failure to appear.

Failure of a respondent to appear in person at the hearing or by a duly authorized counsel constitutes a waiver of respondent's right to a hearing and is deemed an admission of the facts as alleged and consent to the relief sought in the notice. Without further proceedings or notice to the respondent, the administrative law judge shall file with the Comptroller a recommended decision containing the findings and the relief sought in the notice.

§ 19.22 Consolidation and severance of actions.

(a) *Consolidation*. (1) On the motion of any party, or on the administrative law judge's own motion, the administrative law judge may consolidate, for some or all purposes, any two or more proceedings, if each such proceeding involves or arises out of the same transaction, occurrence or series of transactions or occurrences, or involves at least one common respondent or a material common question of law or fact, unless such consolidation would cause unreasonable delay or injustice.

(2) In the event of consolidation under paragraph (a)(1) of this section, appropriate adjustment to the pre-hearing schedule must be made to avoid unnecessary expense, inconvenience, or delay.

(b) *Severance*. The administrative law judge may, upon the motion of any party, sever the proceeding for separate resolution of the matter as to any respondent only if the administrative law judge finds that:

(1) Undue prejudice or injustice to the moving party would result from not severing the proceeding; and

(2) Such undue prejudice or injustice would outweigh the interests of judicial economy and expedition in the complete and final resolution of the proceeding.