

§ 105-8.170-10

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respondent with the Responsible Official within 30 days of receipt of the letter of findings required by

§ 105-8.170-7.

(b) If a timely appeal without a request for hearing is filed by a party, any other party may file a written request for a hearing within the time limit specified in § 105-8.170-9(a) or within 10 days of the date on which the first timely appeal without a request for hearing was filed, whichever is later.

(c) If no party requests a hearing, the Responsible Official shall promptly transmit the notice of appeal and investigative record to the Special Counsel for Ethics and Civil Rights.

(d) If neither party files an appeal within the time prescribed in § 105-8.170-9(a) the Responsible Official shall certify, at the expiration of the time, that the letter of findings is the final agency decision on the complaint.

§ 105-8.170-10 Acceptance of appeals.

The Special Counsel shall accept and process any timely appeal. A party may appeal to the Deputy Administrator from a decision of the Special Counsel that an appeal is untimely. This appeal shall be filed within 15 days of receipt of the decision from the Special Counsel.

§ 105-8.170-11 Hearing.

(a) Upon a timely request for a hearing, the Special Counsel shall take the necessary action to obtain the services of an Administrative law judge (ALJ) to conduct the hearing. The ALJ shall issue a notice to all parties specifying the date, time, and place of the scheduled hearing. The hearing shall be commenced no earlier than 15 days after the notice is issued and no later than 60 days after the request for a hearing is filed, unless all parties agree to a different date, or there are other extenuating circumstances.

(b) The complainant and respondent shall be parties to the hearing. Any interested person or organization may petition to become a party or amicus curiae. The ALJ may, in his or her discretion, grant such a petition if, in his or her opinion, the petitioner has a legitimate interest in the proceedings and the participation will not unduly

delay the outcome and may contribute materially to the proper disposition of the proceedings.

(c) The hearing, decision, and any administrative review thereof shall be conducted in conformity with 5 U.S.C. 554-557 (sections 5-8 of the Administrative Procedure Act). The ALJ shall have the duty to conduct a fair hearing, to take all necessary action to avoid delay, and to maintain order. He or she shall have all powers necessary to these ends, including (but not limited to) the power to—

(1) Arrange and change the date, time, and place of hearings and pre-hearing conferences and issue notices thereof;

(2) Hold conferences to settle, simplify, or determine the issue in a hearing, or to consider other matters that may aid in the expeditious disposition of the hearing;

(3) Require parties to state their position in writing with respect to the various issues in the hearing and to exchange such statements with all other parties;

(4) Examine witnesses and direct witnesses to testify;

(5) Receive, rule on, exclude, or limit evidence;

(6) Rule on procedural items pending before him or her; and

(7) Take any action permitted to the ALJ as authorized by this part, or by the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 551-559).

(d) Technical rules of evidence shall not apply to hearings conducted pursuant to § 105-8.170-11, but rules or principles designed to assure production of credible evidence available and to subject testimony to cross-examination shall be applied by the ALJ whenever reasonably necessary. The ALJ may exclude irrelevant, immaterial, or unduly repetitious evidence. All documents and other evidence offered or taken for the record shall be open to examination by the parties and opportunity shall be given to refute facts and arguments advanced on either side of the issues. A transcript shall be made of the oral evidence except to the extent the substance thereof is stipulated for the record. All decisions shall be based upon the hearing record.

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(e) The costs and expenses for the conduct of a hearing shall be allocated as follows:

(1) Persons employed by the agency shall, upon request to the agency by the ALJ, be made available to participate in the hearing and shall be on official duty status for this purpose. They shall not receive witness fees.

(2) Employees of other Federal agencies called to testify at a hearing shall, at the request of the ALJ and with the approval of the employing agency, be on official duty status during any period of absence from normal duties caused by their testimony, and shall not receive witness fees.

(3) The fees and expenses of other persons called to testify at a hearing shall be paid by the party requesting their appearance.

(4) The ALJ may require the agency to pay travel expenses necessary for the complainant to attend the hearing.

(5) The respondent shall pay the required expenses and charges for the ALJ and court reporter.

(6) All other expenses shall be paid by the party, the intervening party, or amicus curiae incurring them.

(f) The ALJ shall submit in writing recommended findings of fact, conclusions of law, and remedies to all parties and the Special Counsel for Ethics and Civil Rights within 30 days after receipt of the hearing transcripts, or within 30 days after the conclusion of the hearing if no transcript is made. This time limit may be extended with the permission of the Special Counsel.

(g) Within 15 days after receipt of the recommended decision of the ALJ any party may file exceptions to the decision with the Special Counsel. Thereafter, each party will have ten days to file reply exceptions with the Special Counsel.

§ 105-8.170-12 Decision.

(a) The Special Counsel shall make the decision of the agency based on information in the investigative record and, if a hearing is held, on the hearing record. The decision shall be made within 60 days of receipt of the transmittal of the notice of appeal and investigative record pursuant to § 105-8.170-9(c) or after the period for filing exceptions ends, whichever is applica-

ble. If the Special Counsel for Ethics and Civil Rights determines that he or she needs additional information from any party, he or she shall request the information and provide the other party or parties an opportunity to respond to that information. The Special Counsel shall have 60 days from receipt of the additional information to render the decision on the appeal. The Special Counsel shall transmit his or her decision by letter to the parties. The time limits established in this paragraph may be extended with the permission of the Assistant Attorney General. The decision shall set forth the findings, remedial action required, and reasons for the decision. If the decision is based on a hearing record, the Special Counsel shall consider the recommended decision of the ALJ and render a final decision based on the entire record. The Special Counsel may also remand the hearing record to the ALJ for a fuller development of the record.

(b) Any respondent required to take action under the terms of the decision of the agency shall do so promptly. The Official may require periodic compliance reports specifying—

(1) The manner in which compliance with the provisions of the decision has been achieved;

(2) The reasons any action required by the final decision has not yet been taken; and

(3) The steps being taken to ensure full compliance. The Official may retain responsibility for resolving disagreements that arise between the parties over interpretation of the final agency decision or for specific adjudicatory decisions arising out of implementation.

§ 105-8.170-13 Delegation.

The agency may delegate its authority for conducting complaint investigations to other Federal agencies, except that the authority for making the final determination may not be delegated to another agency.

§ 105-8.171 Complaints against an occupant agency.

(a) Upon notification by an occupant agency that it has received a complete complaint alleging that the agency's