

§ 4.212

decedent's death and notice of the pendency of the probate proceedings.

§ 4.212 Contents of notice.

(a) In the notice of hearing, the OHA deciding official must specify that at the stated time and place the OHA deciding official will take testimony to determine the heirs of the deceased person (naming him or her) and, if a will is offered for probate, testimony as to the validity of the will describing it by date. The notice must name all known presumptive heirs of the decedent, and, if a will is offered for probate, the beneficiaries under such will and the attesting witnesses to the will. The notice must cite this subpart as the authority and jurisdiction for holding the hearing, and must inform all persons having an interest in the estate of the decedent, including persons having claims or accounts against the estate, to be present at the hearing or their rights may be lost by default.

(b) The notice must state further that the hearing may be continued to another time and place. A continuance may be announced either at the original hearing by the OHA deciding official or by an appropriate notice posted at the announced place of hearing on or prior to the announced hearing date and hour.

DEPOSITIONS, DISCOVERY, AND PREHEARING CONFERENCE

SOURCE: 66 FR 67656, Dec. 31, 2001, unless otherwise noted.

§ 4.220 Production of documents for inspection and copying.

(a) At any stage of the proceeding prior to the conclusion of the hearing, a party in interest may make a written demand, a copy to be filed with the OHA deciding official, upon any other party to the proceeding or upon a custodian of records on Indians or their trust property, to produce for inspection and copying or photographing, any documents, papers, records, letters, photographs, or other tangible things not privileged, relevant to the issues which are in the other party's or custodian's possession, custody, or control. Upon failure of prompt compliance, the OHA deciding official may

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issue an appropriate order upon a petition filed by the requesting party. At any time prior to closing the record, the OHA deciding official upon his or her own motion, after notice to all parties, may issue an order to any party in interest or custodian of records for the production of material or information not privileged, and relevant to the issues.

(b) Custodians of official records will furnish and reproduce documents, or permit their reproduction, in accordance with the rules governing the custody and control thereof.

§ 4.221 Depositions.

(a) *Stipulation.* Depositions may be taken upon stipulation of the parties. Failing an agreement therefor, depositions may be ordered under paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section.

(b) *Application for taking deposition.* When a party in interest files a written application, the OHA deciding official may at any time thereafter order the taking of the sworn testimony of any person by deposition upon oral examination for the purpose of discovery or for use as evidence at a hearing. The application must be in writing and must set forth:

(1) The name and address of the proposed deponent;

(2) The name and address of that person, qualified under paragraph (d) of this section to take depositions, before whom the proposed examination is to be made;

(3) The proposed time and place of the examination, which must be at least 20 days after the date of the filing of the application; and

(4) The reasons why such deposition should be taken.

(c) *Order for taking deposition.* If after examination of the application the OHA deciding official determines that the deposition should be taken, he or she will order its taking. The order must be served upon all parties in interest and must state:

(1) The name of the deponent;

(2) The time and place of the examination which must not be less than 15 days after the date of the order except as stipulated otherwise; and

(3) The name and address of the officer before whom the examination is to

be made. The officer and the time and place need not be the same as those requested in the application.

(d) *Qualifications of officer.* The deponent must appear before the OHA deciding official or before an officer authorized to administer oaths by the law of the United States or by the law of the place of the examination.

(e) *Procedure on examination.* The deponent must be examined under oath or affirmation and must be subject to cross-examination. The testimony of the deponent must be recorded by the officer or someone in the officer's presence. An applicant who requests the taking of a person's deposition must make his or her own arrangements for payment of any costs incurred.

(f) *Submission to witness; changes; signing.* When the testimony is fully transcribed, the deposition must be submitted to the deponent for examination and must be read to or by him or her, unless such examination and reading are waived by the deponent or by all other parties in interest. Any changes in form or substance which the deponent desires to make must be entered upon the deposition by the officer with a statement of the reasons given by the deponent for making them. The deposition must then be signed by the deponent, unless the parties in interest by stipulation waive the signing, or the witness is ill or cannot be found or refuses to sign. If the deposition is not signed by the deponent, the officer must sign it and state on the record the fact of the waiver, or of the illness or absence of the deponent or the fact of the refusal to sign together with the reason, if any, given therefor; the deposition may then be used as fully as though signed, unless the OHA deciding official holds that the reason given for refusal to sign requires rejection of the deposition in whole or in part.

(g) *Certificates by officer.* The officer must certify on the deposition that the deponent was duly sworn by the officer and that the deposition is a true record of the deponent's testimony. The officer must then securely seal the deposition, together with two copies thereof, in an envelope and must personally deliver or mail the same by certified or registered mail to the OHA deciding official.

(h) *Use of depositions.* A deposition ordered and taken in accord with the provisions of this section may be used in a hearing if the OHA deciding official finds that the witness is absent and that his or her presence cannot be readily obtained, that the evidence is otherwise admissible, and that circumstances exist that make it desirable in the interest of fairness to allow the deposition to be used. If a deposition has been taken, and the party in interest on whose application it was taken refuses to offer the deposition, or any part thereof, in evidence, any other party in interest or the OHA deciding official may introduce the deposition or any portion thereof on which he or she wishes to rely.

§ 4.222 Written interrogatories; admission of facts and documents.

At any time prior to a hearing and in sufficient time to permit answers to be filed before the hearing, a party in interest may serve upon any other party in interest written interrogatories and requests for admission of facts and documents. A copy of such interrogatories and requests must be filed with the OHA deciding official. Such interrogatories and requests for admission must be drawn with the purpose of defining the issues in dispute between the parties and facilitating the presentation of evidence at the hearing. Answers must be served upon the party propounding the written interrogatories or requesting the admission of facts and documents within 30 days from the date of service of such interrogatories or requests, or within such other period of time as may be agreed upon by the parties or prescribed by the OHA deciding official. A copy of the answer must be filed with the OHA deciding official. Within 10 days after written interrogatories are served upon a party, that party may serve cross-interrogatories for answer by the witness to be interrogated.

§ 4.223 Objections to and limitations on production of documents, depositions, and interrogatories.

The OHA deciding official, upon motion timely made by any party in interest, proper notice, and good cause shown, may direct that proceedings