

(b) *Additional proceedings necessary.*

(1) In actions in which additional proceedings are necessary to determine disputed material facts, written findings of fact shall be prepared. The debarring official shall base the decision on the facts as found, together with any information and argument submitted by the respondent and any other information in the administrative record.

(2) The debarring official may refer disputed material facts to another official for findings of fact. The debarring official may reject any such findings, in whole or in part, only after specifically determining them to be arbitrary and capricious or clearly erroneous.

(i) The debarring official may refer either disputed material facts or issues of law, or both to a hearing officer for either findings of fact or conclusions of law, or both.

(ii) Unless the parties mutually agree to extend this period, a proceeding before a hearing officer or other official shall commence within 45 days after referral of the case by the debarring official. The hearing officer or other official shall issue findings of fact within 30 days after the conclusion of such additional proceedings. The time limitations of this subparagraph may be extended upon issuance, by the debarring official, hearing officer or other official, of a written notice describing good cause for such extension.

(3) The debarring official's decision shall be made after the conclusion of the proceedings with respect to the disputed facts.

(i) Such decision shall be made within 15 days after the hearing officer or other official issues findings of fact.

(ii) [Reserved]

(c)(1) *Standard of proof.* In any debarment action, the cause for debarment must be established by a preponderance of the evidence. Where the proposed debarment is based upon a conviction or civil judgment, the standard shall be deemed to have been met.

(2) *Burden of proof.* The burden of proof is on the agency proposing debarment.

(d) *Notice of debarring official's decision.* (1) If the debarring official decides to impose debarment, the respondent shall be given prompt notice:

(i) Referring to the notice of proposed debarment;

(ii) Specifying the reasons for debarment;

(iii) Stating the period of debarment, including effective dates; and

(iv) Advising that the debarment is effective for covered transactions throughout the executive branch of the Federal Government unless an agency head or an authorized designee makes the determination referred to in §24.215.

(A) Where a debarment is based solely on §24.305(f), the notice of the debarring official's decision shall advise that the debarment is effective for programs or activities of the Department.

(B) [Reserved]

(2) If the debarring official decides not to impose debarment, the respondent shall be given prompt notice of that decision. A decision not to impose debarment shall be without prejudice to a subsequent imposition of debarment by any other agency.

[60 FR 33049, June 26, 1995, as amended at 65 FR 38707, June 21, 2000]

§ 24.315 Settlement and voluntary exclusion.

(a) When in the best interest of the Government, HUD may, at any time, settle a debarment or suspension action.

(b) If a participant and the agency agree to a voluntary exclusion of the participant, such voluntary exclusion shall be entered on the Nonprocurement List (see subpart E).

§ 24.320 Period of debarment.

(a) Debarment shall be for a period commensurate with the seriousness of the cause(s). If a suspension precedes a debarment, the suspension period shall be considered in determining the debarment period.

(1) Debarment for causes other than those related to a violation of the requirements of subpart F of this part generally should not exceed three years. Where circumstances warrant, a longer period of debarment may be imposed.

(2) In the case of a debarment for a violation of the requirements of subpart F of this part (see §24.305(c)(5)),