

(e) The administrative law judge may, within his or her discretion, make a determination as to whether a study, conducted by the applicant, was necessary to the preparation of the applicant's case.

### Subpart C—Procedures for Considering Applications

#### § 6.23 Filing and service of documents.

Any application for an award or other pleading or document related to an application shall be filed and served on all parties to the proceeding in the same manner as other pleadings in the proceeding.

#### § 6.25 Answer to application.

(a) Within 30 calendar days after service of an application, the agency counsel may file an answer to the application. Unless the agency counsel requests an extension of time for filing or files a statement of intent to negotiate under paragraph (b) of this section, failure to file an answer within the 30-day period may be treated as a consent to the award request.

(b) If agency counsel and applicant believe that they can reach a settlement concerning the award, the agency counsel may file a statement of intent to negotiate. The filing of such a statement shall extend the time for filing an answer an additional 30 days.

(c) The answer shall explain in detail any objections to the award requested and identify the facts relied on in support of the Department's position. If the answer is based on any alleged facts not already in the record of the proceeding, the Department shall include with the answer either supporting affidavits or a request for further proceedings under § 6.3.

[48 FR 1070, Jan. 10, 1983, as amended at 62 FR 19234, Apr. 21, 1997]

#### § 6.27 Comments by other parties.

Any party to a proceeding, other than the applicant and the Department may file comments on an application within 30 days after it is served or on an answer within 15 days after it is served. A commenting party may not participate further in proceedings on the application.

#### § 6.29 Settlement.

The applicant and agency counsel may agree on a proposed settlement of the award before final action on the application, either in connection with a settlement of the underlying proceeding, or after the underlying proceeding has been concluded, in accordance with the agency's standard settlement procedure. If a prevailing party and the agency counsel agree on a proposed settlement of an award before an application has been filed the application shall be filed with the proposed settlement.

#### § 6.31 Further proceedings.

(a) Ordinarily, the determination of an award will be made on the basis of the written record. However, on request of either the applicant or agency counsel, or on his or her own initiative, the administrative law judge may order further proceedings, such as an informal conference, oral argument, additional written submissions or an evidentiary hearing.

Such further proceedings shall be held only when necessary for full and fair resolution of the issues arising from the application, and shall be conducted as promptly as possible.

(b) A request that the administrative law judge order further proceedings under this section shall specifically identify the information sought or the disputed issues and shall explain why the additional proceedings are necessary to resolve the issues.

#### § 6.33 Decision.

The administrative law judge shall issue an initial decision on the application as soon as possible after completion of proceedings on the application. The decision shall also include, if at issue, findings on whether the Department's position was substantially justified, whether the applicant unduly protracted the proceedings, or whether special circumstances make an award unjust. If the applicant has sought an award against more than one agency, the decision shall allocate responsibility for payment or any award made among the agencies, and shall explain the reasons for the allocation made.