

(m) Prepare and submit a decision or other appropriate disposition document and certify the record;

(n) Award attorney fees and expenses as provided by applicable statute or regulation; and

(o) Grant preliminary or interim relief.

§ 904.205 Disqualification of Judge.

(a) The Judge may withdraw voluntarily from a particular case when the Judge deems himself/herself disqualified.

(b) A party may in good faith request the Judge to withdraw on the grounds of personal bias or other disqualification. The party seeking the disqualification must file with the Judge a timely affidavit or statement setting forth in detail the facts alleged to constitute the grounds for disqualification, and the Judge will rule on the matter. If the Judge rules against disqualification, the Judge will place all matters relating to such claims of disqualification in the record.

§ 904.206 Pleadings, motions, and service.

(a) The original of all pleadings and documents must be filed with the Office of Administrative Law Judges and a copy served upon each party. All pleadings or documents when submitted for filing must show that service has been made upon all parties. Such service must be made in accordance with §904.3(a).

(b) Pleadings and documents to be filed may be reproduced by printing or any other process, provided the copies are clear and legible; must be dated, the original signed in ink or as otherwise verified for electronic mail; and must show the docket description and title of the proceeding, and the title, if any, address, and telephone number of the signatory. If typewritten, the impression may be on only one side of the paper and must be double spaced, pica type, if possible, except that quotations may be single spaced and indented.

(c) Motions must normally be made in writing and must state clearly and concisely the purpose of and relief sought by the motion, the statutory or principal authority relied upon, and

the facts claimed to constitute the grounds requiring the relief requested.

(d) Unless otherwise provided, the answer to any written motion, pleading, or petition must be served within 20 days after date of service thereof. If a motion states that opposing counsel has no objection, it may be acted upon as soon as practicable, without awaiting the expiration of the 20-day period. Answers must be in writing, unless made in response to an oral motion made at a hearing; must fully and completely advise the parties and the Judge concerning the nature of the opposition; must admit or deny specifically and in detail each material allegation of the pleading answered; and must state clearly and concisely the facts and matters of law relied upon. Any new matter raised in an answer will be deemed controverted.

(e) A response to an answer will be called a reply. A short reply restricted to new matters may be served within 15 days of service of an answer. The Judge has discretion to dispense with the reply. No further responses are permitted.

§ 904.207 Amendment of pleadings or record.

The Judge, upon his or her own initiative or upon application by a party, may order a party to make a more definite statement of any pleading. The Judge has discretion to permit either party to amend its pleadings upon conditions fair to both parties. Harmless errors may be corrected (by deletion or substitution of words or figures), and broad discretion will be exercised by the Judge in permitting such corrections.

§ 904.208 Extensions of time.

If appropriate and justified, and as provided in §904.3(e), the Judge may grant any request for an extension of time. Requests for extensions of time must, except in extraordinary circumstances, be made in writing.

§ 904.209 Expedited proceedings.

In the interests of justice and administrative efficiency, the Judge, on his or her own initiative or upon the application of any party, may expedite the

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proceeding. A motion of a party to expedite the proceeding may, in the discretion of the Judge, be made orally or in writing with concurrent actual notice to all parties. If a motion for an expedited hearing is granted, the hearing on the merits may not be scheduled with less than three days' notice, unless all parties consent to an earlier hearing.

§ 904.210 Summary decision.

The Judge may render a summary decision disposing of all or part of the proceeding if:

- (a) Jointly requested by every party to the proceeding; and
- (b) There is no genuine issue as to any material fact and a party is entitled to summary decision as a matter of law.

[61 FR 54731, Oct. 22, 1996]

§ 904.211 Failure to appear.

(a) If a party fails to appear after proper service of notice, the hearing may proceed. A notation of failure to appear will be made in the record, and the hearing may be conducted with the parties then present, or may be terminated if the Judge determines that proceeding with the hearing will not aid the decisional process.

(b) The Judge will place in the record all the facts concerning the issuance and service of the notice of time and place of hearing.

(c) The Judge may deem a failure of a party to appear after proper notice a waiver of any right to a hearing and consent to the making of a decision on the record.

§ 904.212 Failure to prosecute or defend.

Whenever the record discloses the failure of either party to file documents, respond to orders or notices from the Judge, or otherwise indicates an intention on the part of either party not to participate further in the proceeding, the Judge may issue any order, except dismissal, that is necessary for the just and expeditious resolution of the case.

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§ 904.213 Settlements.

If settlement is reached before the Judge has certified the record, the Judge may require the submission of a copy of the settlement agreement to assure that the Judge's consideration of the case is completed and to order the matter dismissed on the basis of the agreement.

§ 904.214 Stipulations.

The parties may, by stipulation, agree upon any matters involved in the proceeding and include such stipulations in the record with the consent of the Judge. Written stipulations must be signed and served upon all parties.

§ 904.215 Consolidation.

The Judge may order two or more proceedings that involve substantially the same parties or the same issues consolidated and/or heard together.

§ 904.216 Prehearing conferences.

(a) Prior to any hearing or at other time deemed appropriate, the Judge may, upon his or her own initiative, or upon the application of any party, arrange a telephone conference and, where appropriate, record such telephone conference, or direct the parties to appear for a conference to consider:

- (1) Simplification or clarification of the issues or settlement of the case by consent;
- (2) The possibility of obtaining stipulations, admissions, agreements, and rulings on admissibility of documents, understandings on matters already of record, or similar agreements that will avoid unnecessary proof;
- (3) Agreements and rulings to facilitate the discovery process;
- (4) Limitation of the number of expert witnesses or other avoidance of cumulative evidence;
- (5) The procedure, course, and conduct of the hearing;
- (6) The distribution to the parties and the Judge prior to the hearing of written testimony and exhibits in order to expedite the hearing;
- (7) Such other matters as may aid in the disposition of the proceeding.

(b) The Judge in his or her discretion may issue an order showing the matters disposed of in such conference.