

(c) *Approval of the Attorney General.* If the Presiding Officer determines that the witness' testimony appears necessary and that the privilege against self-incrimination may be invoked, he/she may certify to the Commission a request that it obtain the approval of the Attorney General of the United States for the issuance of an order granting immunity.

(d) *Issuance of order granting immunity.* Upon application to and approval by the Attorney General of the United States, and after the witness has invoked the privilege against self-incrimination, the Presiding Officer shall issue the order granting immunity unless he/she determines that the privilege was improperly invoked.

(e) *Sanctions for failure to testify.* Failure of a witness to testify after a grant of immunity or after a denial of a motion for the issuance of an order granting immunity shall result in the imposition of appropriate sanctions as provided in § 1025.37 of these rules.

Subpart E—Hearings

§ 1025.41 General rules.

(a) *Public hearings.* All hearings conducted pursuant to these Rules shall be public unless otherwise ordered by the Commission or the Presiding Officer.

(b) *Prompt completion.* Hearings shall proceed with all reasonable speed and, insofar as practicable and with due regard to the convenience of the parties, shall continue without suspension until concluded, except in unusual circumstances or as otherwise provided in these Rules.

(c) *Rights of parties.* Every party shall have the right of timely notice and all other rights essential to a fair hearing, including, but not limited to, the rights to present evidence, to conduct such cross-examination as may be necessary for a full and complete disclosure of the facts, and to be heard by objection, motion, brief, and argument.

(d) *Rights of participants.* Every participant shall have the right to make a written or oral statement of position and to file proposed findings of fact, conclusions of law, and a post hearing brief, in accordance with § 1025.17(b) of these Rules.

(e) *Rights of witnesses.* Any person compelled to testify in any proceedings in response to a subpoena may be accompanied, represented, and advised by legal counsel or other representative, and may purchase a transcript of his/her testimony.

§ 1025.42 Powers and duties of Presiding Officer.

(a) *General.* A Presiding Officer shall have the duty to conduct full, fair, and impartial hearings, to take appropriate action to avoid unnecessary delay in the disposition of proceedings, and to maintain order. He/she shall have all powers necessary to that end, including the following powers:

(1) To administer oaths and affirmations;

(2) To compel discovery and to impose appropriate sanctions for failure to make discovery;

(3) To rule upon offers of proof and receive relevant, competent, and probative evidence;

(4) To regulate the course of the proceedings and the conduct of the parties and their representatives;

(5) To hold conferences for simplification of the issues, settlement of the proceedings, or any other proper purposes;

(6) To consider and rule, orally or in writing, upon all procedural and other motions appropriate in adjudicative proceedings;

(7) To issue Summary Decisions, Initial Decisions, Recommended Decisions, rulings, and orders, as appropriate;

(8) To certify questions to the Commission for its determination; and

(9) To take any action authorized by these Rules or the provisions of title 5, United States Code, sections 551-559.

(b) *Exclusion of parties by Presiding Officer.* A Presiding Officer shall have the authority, for good cause stated on the record, to exclude from participation in any proceedings any party, participant, or representative who violates the requirements of § 1025.66 of these rules. Any party, participant or representative so excluded may appeal to the Commission in accordance with the provisions of § 1025.24 of these rules. If the representative of a party or participant is excluded, the hearing may be

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suspended for a reasonable time so that the party or participant may obtain another representative.

(c) *Substitution of Presiding Officer.* In the event of the substitution of a new Presiding Officer for the one originally designated, any motion predicated upon such substitution shall be made within five (5) days.

(d) *Interference.* In the performance of adjudicative functions, a Presiding Officer shall not be responsible to or subject to the supervision or direction of any Commissioner or of any officer, employee, or agent engaged in the performance of investigative or prosecuting functions for the Commission. All directions by the Commission to a Presiding Officer concerning any adjudicative proceedings shall appear on and be made a part of the record.

(e) *Disqualification of Presiding Officer.* (1) When a Presiding Officer considers himself/herself disqualified to preside in any adjudicative proceedings, he/she shall withdraw by notice on the record and shall notify the Chief Administrative Law Judge and the Secretary of such withdrawal.

(2) Whenever, for good and reasonable cause, any party considers the Presiding Officer to be disqualified to preside, or to continue to preside, in any adjudicative proceedings, that party may file with the Secretary a motion to disqualify and remove, supported by affidavit(s) setting forth the alleged grounds for disqualification. A copy of the motion and supporting affidavit(s) shall be served by the Secretary on the Presiding Officer whose removal is sought. The Presiding Officer shall have ten (10) days to respond in writing to such motion. However, the motion shall not stay the proceedings unless otherwise ordered by the Presiding Officer or the Commission. If the Presiding Officer does not disqualify himself/herself, the Commission shall determine the validity of the grounds alleged, either directly or on the report of another Presiding Officer appointed to conduct a hearing for that purpose and, in the event of disqualification, shall take appropriate action by assigning another Presiding Officer or requesting loan of another Administrative Law Judge through the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

§ 1025.43 Evidence.

(a) *Applicability of Federal Rules of Evidence.* Unless otherwise provided by statute or these rules, the Federal Rules of Evidence shall apply to all proceedings held pursuant to these Rules. However, the Federal Rules of Evidence may be relaxed by the Presiding Officer if the ends of justice will be better served by so doing.

(b) *Burden of proof.* (1) Complaint counsel shall have the burden of sustaining the allegations of any complaint.

(2) Any party who is the proponent of a legal or factual proposition shall have the burden of sustaining that proposition.

(c) *Admissibility.* All relevant and reliable evidence is admissible, but may be excluded by the Presiding Officer if its probative value is substantially outweighed by unfair prejudice or confusion of the issues, or by considerations of undue delay, waste of time, immateriality, or needless presentation of cumulative evidence.

(d) *Official notice—(1) Definition.* Official notice means use by the Presiding Officer or the Commission of facts not appearing on the record and legal conclusions drawn from those facts. An officially noticed fact or legal conclusion must be one not subject to reasonable dispute in that it is either:

(i) Generally known within the jurisdiction of the Commission or

(ii) Capable of accurate and ready determination by resort to sources whose accuracy cannot reasonably be questioned.

(2) *Method of taking official notice.* The Presiding Officer and/or the Commission may at any time take official notice upon motion of any party or upon its own initiative. The record shall reflect the facts and conclusions which have been officially noticed.

(e) [Reserved]

(f) *Offer of proof.* When an objection to proffered testimony or documentary evidence is sustained, the sponsoring party may make a specific offer, either in writing or orally, of what the party expects to prove by the testimony or the document. When an offer of proof is made, any other party may make a specific offer, either in writing or orally, of what the party expects to present