

§ 20.706

resources and personnel for the support of such hearings.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7102, 7105(a), 7107)

[58 FR 27936, May 12, 1993, as amended at 61 FR 20451, May 7, 1996]

§ 20.706 Rule 706. Functions of the presiding Member.

The presiding Member of a hearing panel is responsible for the conduct of the hearing, administration of the oath or affirmation, and for ruling on questions of procedure. The presiding Member will assure that the course of the hearing remains relevant to the issue, or issues, on appeal and that there is no cross-examination of the parties or witnesses. The presiding Member will take such steps as may be necessary to maintain good order at hearings and may terminate a hearing or direct that the offending party leave the hearing if an appellant, representative, or witness persists in disruptive behavior.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7102, 7105(a), 7107)

§ 20.707 Rule 707. Designation of Member or Members to conduct the hearing.

The Member or panel to whom a proceeding is assigned under §19.3 of this part shall conduct any hearing before the Board in connection with that proceeding. Where a proceeding has been assigned to a panel, the Chairman, or the Chairman's designee, shall designate one of the Members as the presiding Member. The Member or Members who conduct the hearing shall participate in making the final determination of the claim, subject to the exception in §19.11(c) of this part (relating to reconsideration of a decision).

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7102, 7107)

[61 FR 20451, May 7, 1996]

§ 20.708 Rule 708. Prehearing conference.

An appellant's authorized representative may request a prehearing conference with the presiding Member of a hearing to clarify the issues to be considered at a hearing on appeal, obtain rulings on the admissibility of evidence, develop stipulations of fact, establish the length of argument which will be permitted, or take other steps

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which will make the hearing itself more efficient and productive. With respect to hearings to be held before the Board at Washington, DC, arrangements for a prehearing conference must be made through: Director, Management and Administration (01E), Board of Veterans' Appeals, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20420. Requests for prehearing conferences in cases involving hearings to be held before the Board at Department of Veterans Affairs field facilities must be addressed to the office of the Department of Veterans Affairs official who signed the letter giving notice of the time and place of the hearing.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7102, 7105(a), 7107)

[61 FR 20452, May 7, 1996]

§ 20.709 Rule 709. Procurement of additional evidence following a hearing.

If it appears during the course of a hearing that additional evidence would assist in the review of the questions at issue, the presiding Member may direct that the record be left open so that the appellant and his or her representative may obtain the desired evidence. The presiding Member will determine the period of time during which the record will stay open, considering the amount of time estimated by the appellant or representative as needed to obtain the evidence and other factors adduced during the hearing. Ordinarily, the period will not exceed 60 days, and will be as short as possible in order that appellate consideration of the case not be unnecessarily delayed.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7102, 7105(a), 7107)

§ 20.710 Rule 710. Witnesses at hearings.

The testimony of witnesses, including appellants, will be heard. All testimony must be given under oath or affirmation. Oath or affirmation is not required for the sole purpose of presenting contentions and argument.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7102, 7105(a), 7107)

[61 FR 29028, June 7, 1996]

§ 20.711 Rule 711. Subpoenas.

(a) *General.* An appellant, or his or her representative, may arrange for the