

§ 101.18 Investigation of petition.

(a) Upon receipt of the petition in the Regional Office, it is docketed and assigned to a member of the staff, usually a field examiner, for investigation. The field examiner conducts an investigation to ascertain (1) whether the employer's operations affect commerce within the meaning of the Act, (2) the appropriateness of the unit of employees for the purposes of collective bargaining and the existence of a bona fide question concerning representation within the meaning of the Act, (3) whether the election would effectuate the policies of the Act and reflect the free choice of employees in the appropriate unit, and (4) whether, if the petitioner is a labor organization seeking recognition, there is a sufficient probability, based on the evidence of representation of the petitioner, that the employees have selected it to represent them. The evidence of representation submitted by the petitioning labor organization or by the person seeking decertification is ordinarily checked to determine the number or proportion of employees who have designated the petitioner, it being the Board's administrative experience that in the absence of special factors the conduct of an election serves no purpose under the statute unless the petitioner has been designated by at least 30 percent of the employees. However, in the case of a petition by an employer, no proof of representation on the part of the labor organization claiming a majority is required and the Regional Director proceeds with the case if other factors require it unless the labor organization withdraws its claim to majority representation. The field examiner, or other member of the staff, attempts to ascertain from all interested parties whether or not the grouping or unit of employees described in the petition constitutes an appropriate bargaining unit. The petition may be amended at any time prior to hearing and may be amended during the hearing in the discretion of the hearing officer upon such terms as he or she deems just.

(b) The petitioner may on its own initiative request the withdrawal of the petition if the investigation discloses that no question of representation exists within the meaning of the statute,

because, among other possible reasons, the unit is not appropriate, or a written contract precludes further investigation at that time, or where the petitioner is a labor organization or a person seeking decertification and the showing of representation among the employees is insufficient to warrant an election under the 30-percent principle stated in paragraph (a) of this section.

(c) For the same or similar reasons the Regional Director may request the petitioner to withdraw its petition. If the petitioner, despite the Regional Director's recommendations, refuses to withdraw the petition, the Regional Director then dismisses the petition, stating the grounds for dismissal and informing the petitioner of its right of appeal to the Board in Washington, DC. The petition may also be dismissed in the discretion of the Regional Director if the petitioner fails to make available necessary facts which are in its possession. The petitioner may within 14 days appeal from the Regional Director's dismissal by filing such request with the Board in Washington, DC; after a full review of the file with the assistance of its staff, the Board may sustain the dismissal, stating the grounds of its affirmance, or may direct the Regional Director to take further action.

§ 101.19 Consent adjustments before formal hearing.

The Board has devised and makes available to the parties three types of informal consent procedures through which representation issues can be resolved without recourse to formal procedures. These informal arrangements are commonly referred to as consent-election agreement followed by Regional Director's determination, stipulated election agreement followed by Board certification, and full consent agreement, in which the parties agree that all pre- and postelection disputes will be resolved with finality by the Regional Director. Forms for use in these informal procedures are available in the Regional Offices.

(a)(1) The consent-election agreement followed by the Regional Director's determination of representatives is one method of informal adjustment of representation cases. The terms of the agreement providing for this form