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§ 4003.53 Where to file.

An appeal or a request for an extension of time to appeal shall be submitted to the Appeals Board, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, 1200 K Street NW., Washington, DC 20005-4026. See § 4000.4 of this chapter for additional information on where to file.

[61 FR 34012, July 1, 1996, as amended at 68 FR 61352, Oct. 28, 2003]

§ 4003.54 Contents of appeal.

- (a) An appeal shall—
 - (1) Be in writing;
 - (2) Be clearly designated as an appeal;
 - (3) Contain a statement of the grounds upon which it is brought and the relief sought;
 - (4) Reference all pertinent information already in the possession of the PBGC and include any additional information believed to be relevant;
 - (5) State whether the appellant desires to appear in person or through a representative before the Appeals Board; and
 - (6) State whether the appellant desires to present witnesses to testify before the Appeals Board, and if so, state why the presence of witnesses will further the decision-making process.
- (b) In any case where the appellant believes that another person may be aggrieved if the PBGC grants the relief sought, the appeal shall also include the name(s) and address(es) (if known) of such other person(s).

§ 4003.55 Opportunity to appear and to present witnesses.

- (a) At the discretion of the Appeals Board, any appearance permitted under this subpart may be before a hearing officer designated by the Appeals Board.
- (b) An opportunity to appear before the Appeals Board (or a hearing officer) and an opportunity to present witnesses will be permitted at the discretion of the Appeals Board. In general, an opportunity to appear will be permitted if the Appeals Board determines that there is a dispute as to a material fact; an opportunity to present witnesses will be permitted when the Appeals Board determines that witnesses

will contribute to the resolution of a factual dispute.

- (c) Appearances permitted under this section will take place at the main offices of the PBGC, 1200 K Street NW., Washington, DC 20005-4026, unless the Appeals Board, in its discretion, designates a different location, either on its own initiative or at the request of the appellant or a third party participating in the appeal.

§ 4003.56 Consolidation of appeals.

- (a) *When consolidation may be required.* Whenever multiple appeals are filed that arise out of the same or similar facts and seek the same or similar relief, the Appeals Board may, in its discretion, order the consolidation of all or some of the appeals.
- (b) *Representation of parties.* Whenever the Appeals Board orders the consolidation of appeals, the appellants may designate one (or more) of their number to represent all of them for all purposes relating to their appeals.
- (c) *Decision by Appeals Board.* The decision of the Appeals Board in a consolidated appeal shall be binding on all appellants whose appeals were subject to the consolidation.

§ 4003.57 Appeals affecting third parties.

- (a) Before the Appeals Board issues a decision granting, in whole or in part, the relief requested in an appeal, it shall make a reasonable effort to notify third persons who will be aggrieved by the decision of the following:
 - (1) The pendency of the appeal;
 - (2) The grounds upon which the appeal is based;
 - (3) The grounds upon which the Appeals Board is considering reversing the initial determination;
 - (4) The right to submit written comments on the appeal;
 - (5) The right to request an opportunity to appear in person or through a representative before the Appeals Board and to present witnesses; and
 - (6) That no further opportunity to present information to the PBGC with respect to the determination under appeal will be provided.
- (b) Written comments and a request to appear before the Appeals Board must be filed within 45 days after the

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date of the notice from the Appeals Board.

(c) If more than one third party is involved, their participation in the appeal may be consolidated pursuant to the provisions of § 4003.56.

§ 4003.58 Powers of the Appeals Board.

In addition to the powers specifically described in this part, the Appeals Board may request the submission of any information or the appearance of any person it considers necessary to resolve a matter before it and to enter any order it considers necessary for or appropriate to the disposition of any matter before it.

§ 4003.59 Decision by the Appeals Board.

(a) In reaching its decision, the Appeals Board shall consider those portions of the file relating to the initial determination, all material submitted by the appellant and any third parties in connection with the appeal, and any additional information submitted by PBGC staff.

(b) The decision of the Appeals Board constitutes the final agency action by the PBGC with respect to the determination which was the subject of the appeal and is binding on all parties who participated in the appeal and who were notified pursuant to § 4003.57 of their right to participate in the appeal.

(c) The decision of the Appeals Board shall be in writing, specify the relief granted, if any, state the bases for the decision, including a brief statement of the facts or legal conclusions supporting the decision, and state that the appellant has exhausted his or her administrative remedies.

§ 4003.60 Referral of appeal to the Executive Director.

The Appeals Board may, in its discretion, refer any appeal to the Executive Director of the PBGC for decision. In such a case, the Executive Director

shall have all the powers vested in the Appeals Board by this subpart and the decision of the Executive Director shall meet the requirements of and have the effect of a decision issued under § 4003.59 of this part.

§ 4003.61 Action by a single Appeals Board member.

(a) *Authority to act.* Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, any member of the Appeals Board has the authority to take any action that the Appeals Board could take with respect to a routine appeal as defined in paragraph (b) of this section.

(b) *Routine appeal defined.* For purposes of this section, a routine appeal is any appeal that does not raise a significant issue of law or a precedent-setting issue. This would generally include any appeal that—

(1) Is outside the jurisdiction of the Appeals Board (for example, an appeal challenging the plan's termination date);

(2) Is filed by a person other than an aggrieved person or an aggrieved person's authorized representative;

(3) Is untimely and presents no grounds for waiver or extension of the time limit for filing the appeal, or only grounds that are clearly without merit;

(4) Presents grounds that clearly warrant or clearly do not warrant the relief requested;

(5) Presents only factual issues that are not reasonably expected to affect other appeals (for example, the participant's date of birth or date of hire); or

(6) Presents only issues that are controlled by settled principles of existing law, including Appeals Board precedent (for example, an issue of plan interpretation that has been resolved by the Appeals Board in a decision on an appeal by another participant in the same plan).

[67 FR 47695, July 22, 2002]