

Commission on Civil Rights

§ 702.5

§ 702.2 Authorization for hearing.

Under 42 U.S.C. 1975a(e)(1) the Commission or, on the authorization of the Commission, any subcommittee of two or more members, at least one of whom shall be of each major political party, may, for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of the Act, hold such hearings and act at such times and locations as the Commission or such authorized subcommittee may deem advisable. The holding of hearings by the Commission or the appointment of a subcommittee to hold hearings pursuant to this section must be approved by a majority of the Commission or by a majority of the members present at a meeting at which at least a quorum of five members is present.

§ 702.3 Notice of hearing.

At least 30 days prior to the commencement of any hearing, the Commission shall publish in the FEDERAL REGISTER notice of the date on which such hearing is to commence, the location at which it is to be held, and the subject of the hearing.

§ 702.4 Subpoenas.

(a) Subpoenas for the attendance and testimony of witnesses or the production of written or other matter may be issued by the Commission over the signature of the Chairperson and may be served by any person designated by the Chairperson.

(b) A witness compelled to appear before the Commission or required to produce written or other matter shall be served with a copy of the rules in this part at the time of service of the subpoena.

(c) The Commission may issue subpoenas for the attendance and testimony of witnesses or for the production of written or other matter. Such a subpoena may not require the presence of a witness more than 100 miles outside the location wherein the witness is found or resides or is domiciled or transacts business or has appointed an agent for receipt of service of process.

(d) The Chairperson shall receive and the Commission shall dispose of requests to subpoena additional witnesses except as otherwise provided in § 702.6(e).

(e) Requests for subpoenas shall be in writing, supported by a showing of the general relevance and materiality of the evidence sought. Witness fees and mileage shall be computed and paid pursuant to § 702.15.

(f) Subpoenas shall be issued at a reasonably sufficient time in advance of their scheduled return, in order to give subpoenaed persons an opportunity to prepare for their appearance and to employ counsel, should they so desire.

(g) No subpoenaed document or information contained therein shall be made public unless it is introduced into and received as part of the official record of the hearing.

§ 702.5 Conduct of proceedings.

(a) The Chairperson shall announce in an opening statement the subject of the proceedings.

(b) Following the opening statement, the Commission shall first convene in executive session if one is required pursuant to the provisions of § 702.6.

(c) The Chairperson, subject to the approval of the Commission, shall:

(1) Set the order of presentation of evidence and appearance of witnesses;

(2) Rule on objections and motions;

(3) Administer oaths and affirmations;

(4) Make all rulings with respect to the introduction into or exclusion from the record of documentary or other evidence;

(5) Regulate the course and decorum of the proceedings and the conduct of the parties and their counsel to ensure that the proceedings are conducted in a fair and impartial manner.

(d) Proceedings shall be conducted with reasonable dispatch and due regard shall be had for the convenience and necessity of witnesses.

(e) The questioning of witnesses shall be conducted only by Members of the Commission, by authorized Commission staff personnel, or by counsel to the extent provided in § 702.7.

(f) In addition to persons served with a copy of the rules in this part pursuant to §§ 702.4 and 702.6, a copy of the rules in this part will be made available to all witnesses.

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(g) The Chairperson may punish breaches of order and decorum by censure and exclusion from the proceedings.

§ 702.6 Executive session.

(a) If the Commission determines that evidence or testimony at any hearing may tend to defame, degrade, or incriminate any person, it shall receive such evidence or testimony or summary of such evidence or testimony in executive session.

(b) The Commission shall afford any persons defamed, degraded, or incriminated by such evidence or testimony an opportunity to appear and be heard in executive session, with a reasonable number of additional witnesses requested by them, before deciding to use such evidence or testimony.

(1) Such person shall be served with notice, in writing, at least 10 days prior to the date, time, and location for the appearance of witnesses at executive session or where service is by mail at least 14 days prior to such date. This notice shall be accompanied by a copy of the rules in this part and by a brief summary of the information that the Commission has determined may tend to defame, degrade, or incriminate such person;

(2) The notice, summary, and rules in this part shall be served by certified mail or by leaving a copy thereof at the last known residence or business address of such person; and

(3) The date of service, for purposes of this section, shall be the day when the material is deposited in the mail or is delivered in person, whichever is applicable. When service is made by mail, the return post office receipt shall be proof of service; in all other cases, the acknowledgment of the party served or the verified return of the one making service shall be proof of the same.

(c) If a person receiving notice under this section notifies the Commission within five days of service of such notice or where service is by mail within eight days of service of such notice that the scheduled appearance constitutes a hardship, the Commission may, in its discretion, set a new date or time for such person's appearance at the executive session.

(d) In the event such persons fail to appear at executive session at the time and location scheduled under paragraph (b) or (c) of this section, they shall not be entitled to another opportunity to appear at executive session, except as provided in § 702.11.

(e) If such persons intend to submit sworn statements of themselves or others, or if they intend that witnesses appear in their behalf at executive session, they shall, no later than 48 hours prior to the time set under paragraph (b) or (c) of this section, submit to the Commission all such statements and a list of all witnesses. The Commission will inform such persons whether the number of witnesses requested is reasonable within the meaning of paragraph (b) of this section. In addition, the Commission will receive and dispose of requests from such persons to subpoena other witnesses. Requests for subpoenas shall be made sufficiently in advance of the scheduled executive session to afford subpoenaed persons reasonable notice of their obligation to appear at that session. Subpoenas returnable at executive session shall be governed by the provisions of § 702.4.

(f) Persons for whom an executive session has been scheduled, and persons compelled to appear at such session, may be represented by counsel at such session to the extent provided by § 702.7.

(g) Attendance at executive session shall be limited to Commissioners; authorized Commission staff personnel; witnesses, and their counsel at the time scheduled for their appearance; and such other persons whose presence is requested or consented to by the Commission.

(h) In the event the Commission determines to release or to use evidence or testimony that it has determined may tend to defame, degrade, or incriminate any persons in such a manner as to reveal publicly their identity, such evidence or testimony, prior to such public release or use, will be presented at a public session, and the Commission will afford them an opportunity to appear as voluntary witnesses or to file a sworn statement in their own behalf and to submit brief and pertinent sworn statements of others.