

person demonstrates to the satisfaction of the accrediting entity that the specific deficiencies that led to the cancellation or refusal to renew have been corrected.

(e) If the accrediting entity grants the agency or person permission to re-apply, the agency or person may file an application with that accrediting entity in accordance with subpart D of this part.

(f) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent an accrediting entity from withdrawing an adverse action if it concludes that the action was based on a mistake of fact or was otherwise in error. Upon taking such action, the accrediting entity will take appropriate steps to notify the Secretary and the Secretary will take appropriate steps to notify the Permanent Bureau of the Hague Conference on Private International Law.

§96.79 Administrative or judicial review of adverse action by the accrediting entity.

(a) Except to the extent provided by the procedures in §96.78, an adverse action by an accrediting entity shall not be subject to administrative review.

(b) Section 202(c)(3) of the IAA (42 U.S.C. 14922(c)(3)) provides for judicial review in Federal court of adverse actions by an accrediting entity, regardless of whether the entity is described in §96.5(a) or (b). When any petition brought under section 202(c)(3) raises as an issue whether the deficiencies necessitating the adverse action have been corrected, the procedures maintained by the accrediting entity pursuant to §96.78 must first be exhausted. Adverse actions are only those actions listed in §96.75. There is no judicial review of an accrediting entity’s decision to deny accreditation or approval, including:

- (1) A denial of an initial application;
- (2) A denial of an application made after cancellation or refusal to renew by the accrediting entity; and
- (3) A denial of an application made after cancellation or debarment by the Secretary.

(c) In accordance with section 202(c)(3) of the IAA (42 U.S.C. 14922(c)(3)), an accredited agency or approved person that is the subject of an

adverse action by an accrediting entity may petition the United States district court in the judicial district in which the agency is located or the person resides to set aside the adverse action imposed by the accrediting entity. The United States district court shall review the adverse action in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 706. When an accredited agency or approved person petitions a United States district court to review the adverse action of an accrediting entity, the accrediting entity will be considered an agency as defined in 5 U.S.C. 701 for the purpose of judicial review of the adverse action.

§96.80 [Reserved]

Subpart L—Oversight of Accredited Agencies and Approved Persons by the Secretary

§96.81 Scope.

The provisions in this subpart establish the procedures governing adverse action by the Secretary against accredited agencies and approved persons. Temporary accreditation is governed by the provisions in subpart N of this part. Unless otherwise provided in subpart N of this part, the provisions in this subpart do not apply to temporarily accredited agencies.

§96.82 The Secretary’s response to actions by the accrediting entity.

(a) There is no administrative review by the Secretary of an accrediting entity’s decision to deny accreditation or approval, nor of any decision by an accrediting entity to take an adverse action.

(b) When informed by an accrediting entity that an agency has been accredited or a person has been approved, the Secretary will take appropriate steps to ensure that relevant information about the accredited agency or approved person is provided to the Permanent Bureau of the Hague Conference on Private International Law. When informed by an accrediting entity that it has taken an adverse action that impacts an agency’s or person’s accreditation or approval status, the Secretary will take appropriate steps to inform the Permanent Bureau of the

Department of State

§ 96.85

Hague Conference on Private International Law.

§ 96.83 Suspension or cancellation of accreditation or approval by the Secretary.

(a) The Secretary must suspend or cancel the accreditation or approval granted by an accrediting entity when the Secretary finds, in the Secretary's discretion, that the agency or person is substantially out of compliance with the standards in subpart F of this part and that the accrediting entity has failed or refused, after consultation with the Secretary, to take action.

(b) The Secretary may suspend or cancel the accreditation or approval granted by an accrediting entity if the Secretary finds that such action:

- (1) Will protect the interests of children;
- (2) Will further U.S. foreign policy or national security interests; or
- (3) Will protect the ability of U.S. citizens to adopt children under the Convention.

(c) If the Secretary suspends or cancels the accreditation or approval of an agency or person, the Secretary will take appropriate steps to notify both the accrediting entity and the Permanent Bureau of the Hague Conference on Private International Law.

§ 96.84 Reinstatement of accreditation or approval after suspension or cancellation by the Secretary.

(a) An agency or person may petition the Secretary for relief from the Secretary's suspension or cancellation of its accreditation or approval on the grounds that the deficiencies necessitating the suspension or cancellation have been corrected. If the Secretary is satisfied that the deficiencies that led to the suspension or cancellation have been corrected, the Secretary shall, in the case of a suspension, terminate the suspension or, in the case of a cancellation, notify the agency or person that it may reapply for accreditation or approval to the same accrediting entity that handled its prior application for accreditation or approval. If that accrediting entity is no longer providing accreditation or approval services, the agency or person may reapply to any accrediting entity with jurisdiction

over its application. If the Secretary terminates a suspension or permits an agency or person to reapply for accreditation or approval, the Secretary will so notify the appropriate accrediting entity. If the Secretary terminates a suspension, the Secretary will also take appropriate steps to notify the Permanent Bureau of the Hague Conference on Private International Law of the reinstatement.

(b) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent the Secretary from withdrawing a cancellation or suspension if the Secretary concludes that the action was based on a mistake of fact or was otherwise in error. Upon taking such action, the Secretary will take appropriate steps to notify the accrediting entity and the Permanent Bureau of the Hague Conference on Private International Law.

§ 96.85 Temporary and permanent debarment by the Secretary.

(a) The Secretary may temporarily or permanently debar an agency from accreditation or a person from approval on the Secretary's own initiative, at the request of DHS, or at the request of an accrediting entity. A debarment of an accredited agency or approved person will automatically result in the cancellation of accreditation or approval by the Secretary, and the accrediting entity shall deny any pending request for renewal of accreditation or approval.

(b) The Secretary may issue a debarment order only if the Secretary, in the Secretary's discretion, determines that:

- (1) There is substantial evidence that the agency or person is out of compliance with the standards in subpart F of this part; and
- (2) There has been a pattern of serious, willful, or grossly negligent failures to comply, or other aggravating circumstances indicating that continued accreditation or approval would not be in the best interests of the children and families concerned. For purposes of this paragraph:

(i) "The children and families concerned" include any children and any families whose interests have been or may be affected by the agency's or person's actions;