

HEARINGS

§ 904.250 Notice of time and place of hearing.

(a) The Judge will promptly serve on the parties notice of the time and place of hearing. The hearing will not, except in extraordinary circumstances, be held less than 20 days after service of the notice of hearing.

(b) In setting a place for hearing, the Judge will consider the convenience and costs of the parties, including but not limited to transportation costs and living expenses of witnesses, attorneys, and the Judge; place of residence of the respondent(s); scheduling of other hearings within the same region; and availability of facilities and court reporters.

(c) Upon the consent of each party to the proceeding, the Judge may order that all or part of a proceeding be heard on submissions or affidavits if it appears that substantially all important issues may be resolved by means of written materials and that efficient disposition of the proceeding can be made without an in-person hearing. For good cause, the Judge may, in his sole discretion, order that the testimony of witnesses be taken by telephone.

[52 FR 10325, Mar. 31, 1987, as amended at 61 FR 54731, Oct. 22, 1996]

§ 904.251 Evidence.

(a) At the hearing, every party has the right to present oral or documentary evidence in support of its case or defense, to submit rebuttal evidence, and to conduct such cross-examination as may be required for a full and true disclosure of the facts. This paragraph may not be interpreted to diminish the powers and duties of the Judge under this subpart.

(b) All evidence that is relevant, material, reliable, and probative, and not unduly repetitious or cumulative, is admissible at the hearing. Formal rules of evidence do not necessarily apply to the proceedings, and hearsay evidence is not inadmissible as such.

(c) Formal exceptions to the rulings of the Judge are unnecessary. It is sufficient that a party, at the time of the ruling, makes known the action that it desires the Judge to take or its objection to an action taken, and the

grounds therefor. Rulings on each objection must appear in the record.

(d) In any case involving a charged violation of law in which the party charged has admitted an allegation, evidence may be taken to establish matters of aggravation or mitigation.

(e) Exhibits in a foreign language must be translated into English before such exhibits are offered into evidence. Copies of both the untranslated and translated versions of the proposed exhibits, along with the name of the translator, must be served on the opposing party at least 10 days prior to the hearing unless the parties otherwise agree.

(f) A party who intends to raise an issue concerning the law of a foreign country must give reasonable notice. The Judge, in determining foreign law, may consider any relevant material or source, whether or not submitted by a party.

§ 904.252 Witnesses.

(a) Any witness not a party may have personal counsel to advise him or her as to his or her rights, but such counsel may not otherwise participate in the hearing.

(b) Witnesses who are not parties may be excluded from the hearing room prior to the taking of their testimony.

(c) Witnesses other than NOAA employees subpoenaed under these rules, including § 904.245, will be paid the same fees and mileage that are paid witnesses in the courts of the United States, and witnesses whose depositions are taken are entitled to the same fees as are paid for like services in the courts of the United States. Fees and any other related expenses for NOAA employees as authorized by the NOAA travel handbook will be paid by the party at whose instance the witness appears or the deposition is taken.

(d) If a witness is expected to testify in a language other than the English language, the party sponsoring the witness must provide for the services of an interpreter and advise opposing counsel 10 days prior to the hearing concerning the extent to which interpreters are to be used. When available, the interpreter must be court certified under 28 U.S.C. 1827.