

§ 2700.46

Judge's order shall include findings and conclusions supporting the determination as to whether the miner's complaint has been frivolously brought. The parties shall be notified of his determination by the most expeditious means reasonably available. Service of the order granting or denying the application shall be by certified or registered mail, return receipt requested.

(f) *Review of order.* Review by the Commission of a Judge's written order granting or denying an application for temporary reinstatement may be sought by filing with the Commission a petition, which shall be captioned "Petition for Review of Temporary Reinstatement Order," with supporting arguments, within 5 days following receipt of the Judge's written order. The filing of any such petition is effective upon receipt. The filing and service of any pleadings under this rule may be made by facsimile transmission. The filing of a petition shall not stay the effect of the Judge's order unless the Commission so directs; a motion for such a stay will be granted only under extraordinary circumstances. Any response shall be filed within 5 days following service of a petition. Pleadings under this rule shall include proof of service on all parties by a means of delivery no less expeditious than that used for filing, except that if service by facsimile transmission is impossible, the filing party shall serve by a third-party commercial overnight delivery service or by personal delivery. The Commission's ruling on a petition shall be made on the basis of the petition and any response (any further briefs will be entertained only at the express direction of the Commission), and shall be rendered within 10 days following receipt of any response or the expiration of the period for filing such response. In extraordinary circumstances, the Commission's time for decision may be extended.

(g) *Dissolution of order.* If, following an order of temporary reinstatement, the Secretary determines that the provisions of section 105(c)(1), 30 U.S.C. 815(c)(1), have not been violated, the Judge shall be so notified and shall enter an order dissolving the order of reinstatement. An order dissolving the order of reinstatement shall not bar

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the filing of an action by the miner in his own behalf under section 105(c)(3) of the Act, 30 U.S.C. 815(c)(3), and § 2700.40(b) of these rules.

[58 FR 12164, Mar. 3, 1993, as amended at 64 FR 48713, Sept. 8, 1999]

Subpart F—Applications for Temporary Relief

§ 2700.46 Procedure.

(a) *When to file.* As provided in section 105(b)(2) of the Act, 30 U.S.C. 815(b)(2), an application for temporary relief from any modification or termination of any order or from any order issued under section 104 of the Act, 30 U.S.C. 814, may be filed at any time before such order becomes final. No temporary relief shall be granted with respect to a citation issued under section 104(a) or (f) of the Act, 30 U.S.C. 814(a) and (f).

(b) *Statements in opposition.* Any party opposing the application shall file a statement in opposition within 4 days after receipt of the application.

(c) *Prior hearing required.* Temporary relief shall not be granted prior to a hearing on such application.

§ 2700.47 Contents of application.

(a) An application for temporary relief shall contain:

(1) A showing of substantial likelihood that the findings and decision of the Judge or the Commission will be favorable to the applicant;

(2) A statement of the specific relief requested; and

(3) A showing that such relief will not adversely affect the health and safety of miners in the affected mine.

(b) An application for temporary relief may be supported by affidavits or other evidence.

Subpart G—Hearings

§ 2700.50 Assignment of Judges.

Judges shall be assigned cases in rotation as far as practicable.

§ 2700.51 Hearing sites.

All cases will be assigned a hearing site by order of the Judge. The Judge shall give due regard to the convenience and necessity of the parties or

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their representatives and witnesses, the availability of suitable hearing facilities, and other relevant factors.

§ 2700.52 Expedition of proceedings.

(a) *Motions.* In addition to making a written motion pursuant to §2700.10, a party may request expedition of proceedings by oral motion, with concurrent notice to all parties, or may file and serve such motion by facsimile. Oral motions shall be reduced to writing within 24 hours.

(b) *Timing of hearing.* Unless all parties consent to an earlier hearing, an expedited hearing on the merits of the case shall not be held on less than 4 days notice.

§ 2700.53 Prehearing conferences and statements.

(a) The Judge may require the parties to participate in a prehearing conference, either in person or by telephone. The participants at any such conference may consider and take action with respect to:

(1) The formulation and simplification of the issues;

(2) The possibility of obtaining stipulations, admissions of fact and of documents that will avoid unnecessary proof and advance rulings from the Judge on the admissibility of evidence;

(3) The exchange of exhibits and the names of witnesses and a synopsis of the testimony expected from each witness;

(4) The necessity or desirability of amendments to the pleadings and the joinder of parties;

(5) The possibility of agreement disposing of any or all of the issues in dispute;

(6) Such other matters as may aid in the expedition of the hearing or the disposition of the case.

(b) The Judge may also require the parties to submit prehearing statements addressing one or more of the matters set forth in paragraph (a) of this section.

§ 2700.54 Notice of hearing.

Except in expedited proceedings, written notice of the time, place, and nature of the hearing, the legal authority under which the hearing is to be held, and the matters of fact and law

asserted shall be given to all parties at least 20 days before the date set for hearing. The notice shall be mailed by certified or registered mail, return receipt requested.

§ 2700.55 Powers of Judges.

Subject to these rules, a Judge is empowered to:

(a) Administer oaths and affirmations;

(b) Issue subpoenas authorized by law;

(c) Rule on offers of proof and receive relevant evidence;

(d) Order depositions to be taken;

(e) Regulate the course of the hearing;

(f) Hold conferences for the settlement or simplification of the issues;

(g) Dispose of procedural requests or similar matters;

(h) Make decisions in the proceedings before him, provided that he shall not be assigned to make a recommended decision; and

(i) Take other action authorized by these rules, by 5 U.S.C. 556, or by the Act.

§ 2700.56 Discovery; general.

(a) *Discovery methods.* Parties may obtain discovery by one or more of the following methods: Depositions upon oral examination or written questions; written interrogatories; or requests for admissions, for production of documents or objects or for permission to enter upon property for inspecting, copying, photographing, and gathering information.

(b) *Scope of discovery.* Parties may obtain discovery of any relevant, non-privileged matter that is admissible evidence or appears likely to lead to the discovery of admissible evidence.

(c) *Limitation of discovery.* Upon motion by a party or by the person from whom discovery is sought or upon his own motion, a Judge may, for good cause shown, limit discovery to prevent undue delay or to protect a party or person from oppression or undue burden or expense.

(d) *Initiation of discovery.* Discovery shall be initiated within 20 days after an answer to a notice of contest, an answer to a petition for assessment of penalty, or an answer to a complaint