

immediately notify the requestor and the Presiding Officer. If valid, the Presiding Officer shall devise means of accommodating such rights. Such means may include protective orders, including access under protective conditions to the computer facilities of the recipient of a request, making material available for inspection, compensation, or other procedures, according to the nature of the right affected by compliance with this paragraph (k)(3) of this section. If the Presiding Officer determines that compensation is necessary to accommodate the affected right, the cost of compensation shall be borne in the same manner that paragraph (k)(3)(iii) of this section prescribes for bearing the costs referenced there. If such right cannot be accommodated by reasonable compensation, or by protective orders or other procedures, and, as a result, materials required by this paragraph (k)(3) of this section cannot be provided, the Presiding Officer shall determine, in his/her discretion, whether evidence that relies upon the materials not provided shall be admissible or afforded limited weight.

(4) *Expedition.* The offeror shall expedite responses to requests made pursuant to this section. Responses shall be served on the requesting party, and notice thereof filed with the Secretary in accordance with the provisions of §3001.12, no later than 14 days after a request is made.

[36 FR 396, Jan. 12, 1971, as amended at 45 FR 65580, Oct. 3, 1980; 47 FR 12796, Mar. 25, 1982; 50 FR 43392, Oct. 25, 1985; 51 FR 8827, Mar. 14, 1986; 51 FR 14992, Apr. 22, 1986; 54 FR 35494, Aug. 28, 1989; 58 FR 38976, July 21, 1993; 62 FR 45729, Aug. 29, 1997; 64 FR 67490, Dec. 2, 1999; 65 FR 6543, Feb. 10, 2000; 67 FR 67563, Nov. 6, 2002]

§3001.31a In camera orders.

(a) *Definition.* Except as hereinafter provided, documents and testimony made subject to *in camera* orders are not made a part of the public record, but are kept confidential, and only authorized parties, their counsel, authorized Commission personnel, and court personnel concerned with judicial review shall have access thereto. The right of the presiding officer, the Commission, and reviewing courts to disclose *in camera* data to the extent nec-

essary for the proper disposition of the proceeding is specifically reserved.

(b) *In camera treatment of documents and testimony.* Presiding officers shall have authority, but only in those unusual and exceptional circumstances when good cause is found on the record, to order documents or oral testimony offered in evidence whether admitted or rejected, to be placed *in camera*. The order shall specify the date on which *in camera* treatment expires and shall include: (1) A description of the documents and testimony; (2) a full statement of the reasons for granting *in camera* treatment; and (3) a full statement of the reasons for the date on which *in camera* treatment expires. Any party desiring, for the preparation and presentation of the case, to disclose *in camera* documents or testimony to experts, consultants, prospective witnesses, or witnesses, shall make application to the presiding officer setting forth the justification therefor. The presiding officer, in granting such application for good cause found, shall enter an order protecting the rights of the affected parties and preventing unnecessary disclosure of information. *In camera* documents and the transcript of testimony subject to an *in camera* order shall be segregated from the public record and filed in a sealed envelope, bearing the title and docket number of the proceeding, the notation "*In Camera Record* under §3001.31a," and the date on which *in camera* treatment expires.

(c) *Release of in camera information.* *In camera* documents and testimony shall constitute a part of the confidential records of the Commission and shall be subject to the provisions of §3001.42 of this chapter. However, the Commission, on its own motion or pursuant to a request, may make *in camera* documents and testimony available for inspection, copying, or use by any other governmental agency. The Commission shall, in such circumstances, give reasonable notice of the impending disclosure to the affected party. However, such notice may be waived in extraordinary circumstances for good cause.

(d) *Briefing of in camera information.* In the submittal of proposed findings, briefs, or other papers, counsel for all

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parties shall make a good faith attempt to refrain from disclosing the specific details of *in camera* documents and testimony. This shall not preclude references in such proposed findings, briefs, or other papers to such documents or testimony including generalized statements based on their contents. To the extent that counsel consider it necessary to include specific details of *in camera* data in their presentations, such data shall be incorporated in separate proposed findings, briefs, or other papers marked "confidential," which shall be placed *in camera* and become a part of the *in camera* record.

[44 FR 33880, June 13, 1979, as amended at 48 FR 15901, Apr. 13, 1983; 58 FR 38976, July 21, 1993]

§ 3001.32 Appeals from rulings of the presiding officer.

(a) *General policy.* The Commission will not review a ruling of the presiding officer prior to its consideration of the entire proceeding except in extraordinary circumstances. This section specifies the showing which participants must make in order to appeal interlocutory rulings.

(b) *Appeals certified by the presiding officer.* (1) Before the issuance of an initial decision pursuant to § 3001.39(a) or the certification of the record to the Commission pursuant to § 3001.38(a), rulings of the presiding officer may be appealed when the presiding officer certifies in writing that an interlocutory appeal is warranted. The presiding officer shall not certify an appeal unless the officer finds that (i) the ruling involves an important question of law or policy concerning which there is substantial ground for difference of opinion and (ii) an immediate appeal from the ruling will materially advance the ultimate termination of the proceeding or subsequent review will be an inadequate remedy.

(2) A request for the presiding officer to certify an appeal shall be made within 5 days after the presiding officer's ruling has been issued. The request shall set forth with specificity the reasons that a participant believes that an appeal meets the criteria of paragraphs (b)(1) (i) and (ii) of this section. Such requests shall also state in

detail the legal, policy, and factual arguments supporting the participant's position that the ruling should be modified. If the appeal is from a ruling rejecting or excluding evidence, such request shall include a statement of the substance of the evidence which the participant contends would be adduced by the excluded evidence and the conclusions intended to be derived therefrom.

(3) The presiding officer may request responsive pleadings from other participants prior to ruling upon the request to certify an appeal.

(c) *Appeals not certified by the presiding officer.* If the presiding officer declines to certify an appeal, a participant who has requested certification may apply to the Commission for review within 10 days. Unless the Commission directs otherwise, its review of the application will be based on the record and pleadings filed before the presiding officer pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section.

(d) *Action by the Commission.* (1) The Commission may dismiss an appeal certified by the presiding officer if it determines that (i) the objection to the ruling should be deferred until the Commission's consideration of the entire proceeding or (ii) interlocutory review is otherwise not warranted or appropriate under the circumstances.

(2) Where the presiding officer has declined to certify an appeal, the Commission will not allow an application for review unless it determines (i) that the presiding officer should have certified the matter, (ii) that extraordinary circumstances exist, and (iii) that prompt Commission decision is necessary to prevent grave detriment to the public interest.

(3) The Commission may issue an order accepting an interlocutory appeal within 15 days after the presiding officer certifies the appeal or a participant files an application for review. If the Commission fails to issue such an order, leave to appeal from the presiding officer's interlocutory ruling shall be deemed to be denied. If the Commission issues an order accepting an appeal, it may rule upon the merits of the appeal in that order or at a later time.