

§ 16.13

(b) *Exceptions.* If there are unique or unusually complex issues involved, or other exceptional circumstances, the Board may use additional procedures.

(c) *Regular expedited procedures.* (1) Within 30 days after receiving the Board's acknowledgment of the appeal (see §16.7), each party shall submit to the Board and the other party any relevant background documents (organized as required under §16.8), with a cover letter (generally not to exceed ten pages) containing any arguments the party wishes to make.

(2) Promptly after receiving the parties' submissions, the presiding Board member will arrange a telephone conference call to receive the parties' oral comments in response to each other's submissions. After notice to the parties, the Board will record the call. The Board member will advise the parties whether any opportunities for further briefing, submissions or oral presentations will be established. Cooperative efforts will be encouraged (see §16.8(d)).

(3) The Board may require the parties to submit proposed findings and conclusions.

(d) *Special expedited procedures where there has already been review.* Some HHS components (for example, the Public Health Service) use a board or other relatively independent reviewing authority to conduct a formal preliminary review process which results in a written decision based on a record including documents or statements presented after reasonable notice and opportunity to present such material. In such cases, the following rules apply to appeals of \$25,000 or less instead of those under paragraph (c) of this section:

(1) Generally, the Board's review will be restricted to whether the decision of the preliminary review authority was clearly erroneous. But if the Board determines that the record is inadequate, or that the procedures under which the record was developed in a given instance were unfair, the Board will not be restricted this way.

(2) Within 30 days after receiving the Board's acknowledgment of appeal (see §16.7), the parties shall submit the following:

(i) The appellant shall submit to the Board and the respondent a statement

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why the decision was clearly erroneous. Unless allowed by the Board after consultation with the respondent, the appellant shall not submit further documents.

(ii) The respondent shall submit to the Board the record in the case. If the respondent has reason to believe that all materials in the record already are in the possession of the appellant, the respondent need only send the appellant a list of the materials submitted to the Board.

(iii) The respondent may, if it wishes, submit a statement why the decision was not clearly erroneous.

(3) The Board, in its discretion, may allow or require the parties to present further arguments or information.

§ 16.13 Powers and responsibilities.

In addition to powers specified elsewhere in these procedures, Board members have the power to issue orders (including "show cause" orders); to examine witnesses; to take all steps necessary for the conduct of an orderly hearing; to rule on requests and motions, including motions to dismiss; to grant extensions of time for good reasons; to dismiss for failure to meet deadlines and other requirements; to close or suspend cases which are not ready for review; to order or assist the parties to submit relevant information; to remand a case for further action by the respondent; to waive or modify these procedures in a specific case with notice to the parties; to reconsider a Board decision where a party promptly alleges a clear error of fact or law; and to take any other action necessary to resolve disputes in accordance with the objectives of these procedures.

§ 16.14 How Board review is limited.

The Board shall be bound by all applicable laws and regulations.

§ 16.15 Failure to meet deadlines and other requirements.

(a) Since one of the objectives of administrative dispute resolution is to provide a decision as fast as possible consistent with fairness, the Board will not allow parties to delay the process unduly. The Board may grant extensions of time, but only if the party gives a good reason for the delay.

(b) If the appellant fails to meet any filing or procedural deadlines, appeal file or brief submission requirements, or other requirements established by the Board, the Board may dismiss the appeal, may issue an order requiring the party to show cause why the appeal should not be dismissed, or may take other action the Board considers appropriate.

(c) If the respondent fails to meet any such requirements, the Board may issue a decision based on the record submitted to that point or take such other measures as the Board considers appropriate.

§ 16.16 Parties to the appeal.

(a) The only parties to the appeal are the appellant and the respondent. If the Board determines that a third person is a real party in interest (for example, where the major impact of an audit disallowance would be on the grantee's contractor, not on the grantee), the Board may allow the third person to present the case on appeal for the appellant or to appear with a party in the case, after consultation with the parties and if the appellant does not object.

(b) The Board may also allow other participation, in the manner and by the deadlines established by the Board, where the Board decides that the intervenor has a clearly identifiable and substantial interest in the outcome of the dispute, that participation would sharpen issues or otherwise be helpful in resolution of the dispute, and that participation would not result in substantial delay.

§ 16.17 Ex parte communications (communications outside the record).

(a) A party shall not communicate with a Board or staff member about matters involved in an appeal without notice to the other party. If such communication occurs, the Board will disclose it to the other party and make it part of the record after the other party has an opportunity to comment. Board members and staff shall not consider any information outside the record (see § 16.21 for what the record consists of) about matters involved in an appeal.

(b) The above does not apply to the following: Communications among

Board members and staff; communications concerning the Board's administrative functions or procedures; requests from the Board to a party for a document (although the material submitted in response also must be given to the other party); and material which the Board includes in the record after notice and an opportunity to comment.

§ 16.18 Mediation.

(a) *In cases pending before the Board.* If the Board decides that mediation would be useful to resolve a dispute, the Board, in consultation with the parties, may suggest use of mediation techniques and will provide or assist in selecting a mediator. The mediator may take any steps agreed upon by the parties to resolve the dispute or clarify issues. The results of mediation are not binding on the parties unless the parties so agree in writing. The Board will internally insulate the mediator from any Board or staff members assigned to handle the appeal.

(b) *In other cases.* In any other grants dispute, the Board may, within the limitations of its resources, offer persons trained in mediation skills to aid in resolving the dispute. Mediation services will only be offered at the request, or with the concurrence, of a responsible federal program official in the program under which the dispute arises. The Board will insulate the mediator if any appeal subsequently arises from the dispute.

§ 16.19 How to calculate deadlines.

In counting days, include Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays; but if a due date would fall on a Saturday, Sunday or Federal holiday, then the due date is the next Federal working day.

§ 16.20 How to submit material to the Board.

(a) All submissions should be addressed as follows: Departmental Grant Appeals Board, Room 2004, Switzer Building, 330 C Street SW., Washington, DC 20201.

(b) All submissions after the notice of appeal should identify the Board's docket number (the Board's acknowledgement under § 16.7 will specify the docket number).