

Department of Health and Human Services

§ 73b.4

retired officers of the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service, because of violation of the post-employment restrictions of the conflict of interest laws and regulations.

§ 73b.2 Rules and regulations.

This part will be applied in conformance with the standards established by the Office of Government Ethics in its regulations, 5 CFR Part 737, and interpretations thereof. Former officers and employees of the Department may request advice and assistance in compliance with those regulations from the Assistant General Counsel, Business and Administrative Law Division, Department of Health and Human Services.

§ 73b.3 Reports of violations.

(a) If an officer or employee of the Department has reason to believe that a former officer or employee of the Department has violated any provision of 18 U.S.C. 207 (a), (b) or (c) or if any such officer or employee receives information to that effect, he/she shall promptly make a written report thereof which shall be forwarded to the Inspector General. If any other person has information of such violations, he/she may make a report thereof to the Inspector General or to any officer or employee of the Department.

(b) The Inspector General shall coordinate proceedings under this part with the Department of Justice in cases where it appears criminal prosecution is warranted.

§ 73b.4 Proceedings.

(a) Upon a determination by the Assistant General Counsel, Business and Administrative Law Division, or his/her designee, after investigation by the Inspector General, that there is reasonable cause to believe that a former officer or employee, including a former special Government employee, of the Department of Health and Human Services (former departmental employee) has violated 18 U.S.C. 207 (a), (b) or (c), the Assistant General Counsel, or his/her designee, shall cause a copy of written charges of the violation(s) to be served upon such individual, either personally or by registered mail. The charges shall be accompanied by a no-

tice to the former departmental employee to show cause within a specified time of not less than 30 days after receipt of the notice why he/she should not be prohibited from engaging in representational activities in relation to matters pending in the Department, as authorized by 18 U.S.C. 207(j), or subjected to other appropriate debarment or disqualification action under that statute. The notice to show cause shall include:

(1) A statement of allegations, and their bases, sufficiently detailed to enable the former departmental employee to prepare an adequate defense;

(2) Notification of the right to a hearing, and that failure to answer shall constitute a waiver of defense; and

(3) An explanation of the method by which a hearing may be requested.

(b) If a former departmental employee who submits an answer to the notice to show cause does not request a hearing or if the Assistant General Counsel does not receive an answer within the time prescribed by the notice, the Assistant General Counsel shall forward the record, including the report(s) of investigation, to the Assistant Secretary for Personnel Administration (Assistant Secretary). In the case of a failure to answer, such failure shall constitute a waiver of defense.

(c) Upon receipt of a former departmental employee's request for a hearing, the Assistant General Counsel shall notify him/her of the time and place thereof, giving due regard both to such person's need for an adequate period to prepare a suitable defense and an expeditious resolution of allegations that may be damaging to his or her reputation.

(d) The presiding officer at the hearing and any related proceedings shall be a federal administrative law judge. He/she shall insure that the former departmental employee has the following rights:

(1) To self-representation or representation by counsel,

(2) To introduce and examine witnesses and submit physical evidence,

(3) To confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses,

(4) To present oral argument, and

(5) To a transcript or recording of the proceedings, upon request.

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(e) The Assistant General Counsel shall designate one or more officers or employees of the Department to present the evidence against the former departmental employee and perform other functions incident to the proceedings.

(f) A decision adverse to the former departmental employee must be sustained by substantial evidence that he/she violated 18 U.S.C. 207 (a), (b) or (c). If a judgment of conviction has been entered by a Federal district court against the former departmental employee for violation of 18 U.S.C. 207 (a), (b) or (c), regardless of whether the judgment is based upon a verdict or a plea of guilty, such judgment of conviction shall be conclusive evidence of a violation of 18 U.S.C. 207 (a), (b) or (c), unless and until the judgment is vacated or reversed on appeal.

(g) The administrative law judge shall issue an initial decision based exclusively on the transcript of testimony and exhibits, together with all papers and requests filed in the proceeding, and shall set forth in the decision findings and conclusions, supported by reasons, on the material issues of fact and law presented on the record.

(h) Within 30 days after issuance of the initial decision, either party may appeal in writing to the Assistant Secretary who in that event shall issue the final decision based on the record of the proceedings or those portions thereof cited by the parties to limit the issues. If the final decision modifies or reverses the initial decision, the Assistant Secretary shall specify the findings of fact and conclusions of law that vary from those of the presiding officer.

(i) If a former departmental employee fails to appeal from an adverse initial decision within the prescribed period of time, the administrative law judge shall forward the record of the proceedings to the Assistant Secretary.

(j) In the case of a former departmental employee who filed an answer to the notice to show cause but did not request a hearing, the Assistant Secretary shall make the final decision on the record submitted to him by the Assistant General Counsel pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section.

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(k) In a case where:

(1) The defense has been waived,

(2) The former departmental employee has failed to appeal from an adverse initial decision, or

(3) The Assistant Secretary has issued a final decision that the former departmental employee violated 18 U.S.C. 207 (a), (b) or (c),

The Assistant Secretary may issue an order:

(i) Prohibiting the former departmental employee from making, on behalf of any other person (except the United States), any informal or formal appearance before, or, with the intent to influence, any oral or written communication to, the Department on a pending matter of business for a period not to exceed five years, or

(ii) Prescribing other appropriate debarment or disqualification action, such as limiting the action to a particular organization or organizations within the Department.

(1) An order issued under either paragraph (k)(i) or (k)(ii) of this section shall be supplemented by a directive to officers and employees of the Department not to engage in conduct in relation to the former departmental employee that would contravene such order.

§ 73b.5 Hearings.

(a) Hearings shall be stenographically recorded and transcribed and the testimony of witnesses shall be taken under oath or affirmation. Hearings will be closed unless an open hearing is requested by the respondent, except that if classified information or protected information of third parties is likely to be adduced at the hearing, it will remain closed. If either party to the proceeding fails to appear at the hearing, after due notice thereof has been sent to him/her, he/she shall be deemed to have waived the right to a hearing and the administrative law judge may make a decision on the basis of the record before him/her at that time.

(b) The rules of evidence prevailing in courts of law and equity are not controlling in hearings under this part. However, the administrative law judge