

§ 10.6

time begins to run shall not be included. The last day of the period so computed is to be included unless it is a Saturday, a Sunday, or a legal holiday; in which event the period runs until the end of the next day which is not a Saturday, a Sunday or a legal holiday. Intermediate Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays shall be excluded from the computation only when the period of time prescribed or allowed is less than seven days.

§ 10.6 Changes in time permitted for filing.

Except as otherwise provided by law or by these rules, for good cause shown the Commission or the Presiding Officer before whom a matter is then pending, on their own motion or the motion of a party, at any time may extend or shorten the time limit prescribed by the rules for filing any document. In any instance in which a time limit is not prescribed for an action to be taken in a proceeding, the Commission or the Presiding Officer may set a time limit for that action.

§ 10.7 Date of entry of orders.

In computing any period of time involving the date of the entry of an order the date of entry shall be the date the order is served by the Proceedings Clerk.

[41 FR 2511, Jan. 16, 1976, as amended at 60 FR 54801, Oct. 26, 1995]

§ 10.8 Presiding officers.

Unless otherwise determined by the Commission, all proceedings within the scope of this part shall be assigned to an Administrative Law Judge for hearing. If the Commission determines that a proceeding within the scope of this subpart shall be conducted before a Presiding Officer who is not an Administrative Law Judge, all provisions of this part that refer to and grant authority to or impose obligations upon an Administrative Law Judge shall be read as referring to and granting authority to and imposing obligations upon the designated Presiding Officer.

(a) *Functions and responsibilities of Administrative Law Judge.* The Administrative Law Judge shall be responsible for the fair and orderly conduct of the pro-

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ceeding and shall have the authority to:

- (1) Administer oaths and affirmations;
- (2) Issue subpoenas;
- (3) Rule on offers of proof;
- (4) Receive relevant evidence;
- (5) Examine witnesses;
- (6) Regulate the course of the hearing;
- (7) Hold prehearing conferences;
- (8) Consider and rule upon all motions;
- (9) Make decisions in accordance with § 10.84 of these rules;
- (10) Certify interlocutory matters to the Commission for its determination in accordance with § 10.101 of these rules;

(11) Take such action as is just or appropriate, if a party or agent of a party fails to comply with an order issued by the Administrative Law Judge;

(12) Take any other action required to give effect to these Rules of Practice, including but not limited to requesting the parties to file briefs and statements of position with respect to any issue in the proceeding.

(b) *Disqualification of Administrative Law Judge*—(1) *At his own request.* An Administrative Law Judge may withdraw from any proceeding when he considers himself to be disqualified. In such event he immediately shall notify the Commission and each of the parties of his withdrawal and of his reason for such action.

(2) *Upon the request of a party.* Any party or person who has been granted leave to be heard pursuant to these rules may request an Administrative Law Judge to disqualify himself on the grounds of personal bias, conflict or similar bases. Interlocutory review of an adverse ruling by the Administrative Law Judge may be sought without certification of the matter by the Administrative Law Judge, in accordance with the procedures set forth in § 10.101.

§ 10.9 Separation of functions.

(a) An Administrative Law Judge will not be responsible to or subject to the supervision or direction of any officer, employee, or agent of the Commission engaged in the performance of investigative or prosecutorial functions for the Commission.

(b) No officer, employee or agent of the Commission who is engaged in the performance of investigative or prosecuting functions in connection with any proceeding shall, in that proceeding or any factually related proceeding, participate or advise in the decision of the Administrative Law Judge or the Commission except as witness or counsel in the proceeding, without the express written consent of the respondents in the proceeding. This provision shall not apply to the members of the Commission.

[41 FR 2511, Jan. 16, 1976, as amended at 63 FR 55791, Oct. 19, 1998]

§ 10.10 Ex parte communications.

(a) *Definitions.* For purposes of this section:

(1) *Commission decisional employee* means employees of the Commission who are or may reasonably be expected to be involved in the decisionmaking process in any proceeding, including, but not limited to:

- (i) Members of the personal staffs of the Commissioners;
- (ii) Members of the staffs of the Administrative Law Judges;
- (iii) The Deputy General Counsel for Opinions and Review and staff of the Office of General Counsel.
- (iv) Members of the staff of the Office of Proceedings; and
- (v) Other Commission employees who may be assigned to hear or to participate in the decision of a particular matter;

(2) *Ex parte communication* means an oral or written communication not on the public record with respect to which reasonable prior notice to all parties is not given, but does not include requests for status reports on any matter or proceeding covered by this part;

(3) *Interested person* includes parties and other persons who might be adversely affected or aggrieved by the outcome of a proceeding; their officers, agents, employees, associates, affiliates, attorneys, accountants or other representatives; and any other person having a direct or indirect pecuniary or other interest in the outcome of a proceeding;

(4) *Party* includes a person or agency named or admitted as a party, or properly seeking and entitled as of right to

be admitted as a party, to a proceeding, and a person or agency permitted limited participation or to state views in a proceeding by the Commission.

(b) *Prohibitions against ex parte communications.* (1) No interested person outside the Commission shall make or knowingly cause to be made to any Commissioner, Administrative Law Judge or Commission decisional employee an ex parte communication relevant to the merits of a proceeding.

(2) No Commissioner, Administrative Law Judge or Commission decisional employee shall make or knowingly cause to be made to any interested person outside the Commission an ex parte communication relevant to the merits of a proceeding.

(c) *Procedures for handling ex parte communications.* A Commissioner, Administrative Law Judge or Commission decisional employee who receives, or who makes or knowingly causes to be made, an ex parte communication prohibited by paragraph (b) of this section shall:

(1) Place on the public record of the proceeding:

- (i) All such written communications;
- (ii) Memoranda stating the substance of all such oral communications; and
- (iii) All written responses, and memoranda stating the substance of all oral responses, to the materials described in paragraphs (c) (1)(i) and (1)(ii) of this section; and

(2) Promptly give written notice of such communication and responses thereto to all parties to the proceedings to which the communication or responses relate.

(d) *Sanctions.* (1) Upon receipt of an ex parte communication knowingly made or knowingly caused to be made by a party in violation of the prohibition contained in paragraph (b)(1) of this section, the Commission, Administrative Law Judge or Commission employee presiding at the hearing may, to the extent consistent with the interests of justice and the policy of the Act, require the party to show cause why his claim or interest in the proceeding should not be dismissed, denied, disregarded, or otherwise adversely affected on account of such violation.