

## § 1210.6

### § 1210.6 Savings provision.

This part does not apply to adverse actions proposed prior to the date of an affected employee's coverage under 5 CFR part 9701, subpart G.

## Subpart B—Procedures for Appeals of Actions Taken Under 5 CFR Part 9701, Subpart F

### § 1210.10 Notice of appeal rights.

(a) When the Department of Homeland Security (or component thereof) issues a decision notice to an employee on a matter that is appealable to the Board, except as provided under 5 CFR 9701.707, the Department must provide the employee with the following:

(1) Notice of the time limits for appealing to the Board, the requirements of 5 CFR 1201.22(c), and the address of the appropriate Board office for filing the appeal;

(2) A copy, or access to a copy, of the Board's regulations at 5 CFR parts 1201 and 1210, and relevant Department of Homeland Security regulations;

(3) A copy of MSPB Form 185, the MSPB Appeal Form. MSPB Form 185 can be accessed at the Board's Web site (<http://www.mspb.gov>);

(4) Notice of any right the employee has to file a grievance, and that the election of any applicable grievance procedure may result in a waiver of the employee's right to file an appeal with the Board; and

(5) Notice that a copy of the decision notice either must be filed with the appeal or sent to the Board via facsimile or e-mail within one day after the appeal is filed.

(b) The notice must also include a specific statement that the matter was taken under 5 CFR part 9701.

### § 1210.11 Filing an appeal.

(a) *Time of filing.* An appeal must be filed no later than 20 days after the effective date of the action being appealed, or no later than 20 days after the date of service of the Department's decision, whichever is later. A response to an appeal must be filed within 15 days of the date of service of the acknowledgment order. All other submissions to the adjudicating official must be filed in accordance with the time

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limits set in the Board's acknowledgment order or in any other order issued by the adjudicating official.

(b) *Computation of time.* The time for filing a submission under this subpart is computed in accordance with 5 CFR 1201.23.

(c) *Place for filing.* Appeals, and responses to those appeals, must be filed with the appropriate Board regional or field office. See 5 CFR 1201.4(d), 1201.22(a), and Appendix II to part 1201.

(d) *Decision notice.* A copy of the decision notice either must be filed with the appeal or sent to the Board via facsimile or e-mail within one day after the appeal is filed.

### § 1210.12 Representatives.

Each party has the right to be represented by an attorney or other representative. Either party may file a motion to disqualify a representative at any time during the proceedings.

### § 1210.13 Burden and degree of proof; affirmative defenses.

(a) *Burden and degree of proof—(1) Agency.* Subject to paragraph (b) of this section, the decision of the Department must be sustained if it is supported by a preponderance of the evidence.

(2) *Appellant.* The appellant has the burden of proof, by a preponderance of the evidence, with respect to:

- (i) Issues of jurisdiction;
- (ii) The timeliness of the appeal; and
- (iii) Affirmative defenses.

(b) *Affirmative defenses of the appellant.* The decision of the Department must be sustained where it has met the evidentiary standard stated in paragraph (a) of this section, unless the appellant shows that:

(1) There was harmful error in the application of the Department's procedures in arriving at its decision;

(2) The decision was based on a prohibited personnel practice described in 5 U.S.C. 2302(b); or

(3) The decision was not in accordance with law.

(c) *Definitions.* The following definitions apply to this part:

(1) *Preponderance of the evidence.* The degree of relevant evidence that a reasonable person, considering the record as a whole, would accept as sufficient

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to find that a contested fact is more likely to be true than untrue.

(2) *Harmful error.* Error by the Department in the application of its procedures that is likely to have caused it to reach a conclusion different from the one it would have reached in the absence or cure of the error. The burden is on the appellant to show that the error was harmful, i.e., that it caused substantial harm or prejudice to his or her rights.

(d) *Efficiency of the service.* Pursuant to 5 CFR 9701.606, the Department may take an adverse action under subpart F of 5 CFR part 9701 only for such cause as will promote the efficiency of the service.

### § 1210.14 Initial disclosures; scope of discovery.

(a) *Initial disclosures.* Except to the extent otherwise directed by order, each party must, without awaiting a discovery request and within ten calendar days following the date of the Board's acknowledgment order, provide the following information to the other party:

(1) The Department must provide:

(i) The Departmental record required by 5 CFR 9701.612; and

(ii) The name and, if known, the address and telephone number of each individual likely to have discoverable information that the Department may use in support of its claims or defenses, identifying the subjects of such information.

(2)(i) The appellant must provide:

(A) A copy of, or a description by category or location of all documents in the possession, custody or control of the appellant that the appellant may use in support of his or her claims or defenses; and

(B) The name and, if known, the address and telephone number of each individual likely to have discoverable information that the appellant may use in support of his or her claims or defenses, identifying the subjects of the information.

(ii) Each party must make its initial disclosure based on the information then reasonably available to the party. A party is not excused from making its disclosures because it has not fully completed the investigation of its case,

because it challenges the sufficiency of the other party's disclosures or because the other party has not made its disclosures.

(b) *Scope of discovery.* The parties may seek discovery regarding any matter that is relevant to any of their claims or defenses. However, by motion, either party may seek to limit such discovery because the burden or expense of providing the material outweighs its benefit, or because the material sought is privileged, not relevant, unreasonably cumulative or duplicative, or can be secured from some other source that is more convenient, less burdensome, or less expensive.

### § 1210.15 Discovery procedures.

(a) *Responses to discovery requests.* Prior to filing a motion to limit discovery, the parties must confer and attempt to resolve any pending objection(s). To the extent not inconsistent with this subpart, and subject to modified time limits and procedures that may be set by the adjudicating official, the provisions of 5 CFR 1201.71 through 1201.85 govern discovery in cases under this subpart.

(b) *Limitations on discovery.* (1) Neither party may submit more than one set of interrogatories, one set of requests for production of documents, and one set of requests for admissions. The number of interrogatories or requests for production or admissions may not exceed 25 per pleading, including subparts. In addition, neither party may conduct/compel more than 2 depositions.

(2) Either party may file a motion requesting additional discovery. Such motion may be granted only if the party has shown necessity and good cause to warrant such additional discovery.

### § 1210.16 Intervention.

The Director may, as a matter of right at any time in the proceeding, intervene or otherwise participate in any proceeding under this Part in any case in which the Director believes that an erroneous decision will have a substantial impact on a civil service law, rule, regulation, or policy directive.