

participate in the program, a denial of a claim brought by a firm against FNS, or the forfeiture of a collateral bond, the designated reviewer shall direct that the firm not be approved for participation, not be paid any part of the disputed claim, or not be reimbursed for any bond forfeiture, until the designated reviewer has made a determination.

(b) *Filing supporting information.* If the request filed by the firm includes a request for an opportunity to file written information in support of its position at a later date, the designated reviewer shall promptly notify the firm of the date by which the information shall be filed. If the firm fails to file any information in support of its position by the designated date, the information submitted with the original request shall be considered to be the only information submitted by the firm. In that case, if no information in support of the firm's position was submitted with the original request, the action of the appropriate FNS office shall be final.

(c) *Extensions of time.* Upon timely written request to FNS by the firm requesting the review, FNS may grant extensions of time if, in FNS' discretion, additional time is required for the firm to fully present information in support of its position. However, no extension may be made in the time allowed for the filing of a request for review.

[Amdt. 136, 43 FR 43279, Sept. 22, 1978, as amended by Amdt. 236, 49 FR 22059, May 25, 1984; Amdt. 258, 49 FR 28393, July 12, 1984; 49 FR 29769, July 24, 1984; Amdt. 356, 59 FR 29714, June 9, 1994; 64 FR 23174, Apr. 30, 1999. Redesignated and amended at 68 FR 41053, July 10, 2003]

§ 279.5 Determination of the designated reviewer.

(a) *Basis for designated reviewer determination.* The designated reviewer shall make a determination based upon:

(1) The information submitted by the appropriate FNS office;

(2) Information submitted by the firm in support of its position; and

(3) Any additional information, in writing, obtained by the designated reviewer from any other person having relevant information.

(b) *Review of denial or withdrawal of authorization.* When the action under review is the denial of an application for authorization or the withdrawal of an existing authorization, the designated reviewer shall sustain the action under review; sustain the action under review, but specify a shorter period of time the action will remain in effect; or direct that the action under review be reversed.

(c) *Review of disqualification or civil money penalty or fine.* When the action under review is disqualifying a firm from program participation or assessing a civil money penalty or fine against a firm, the designated reviewer shall: Sustain the action under review; specify a shorter period of disqualification; specify a reduced money penalty or fine; direct that an official warning letter be issued to the firm in lieu of a disqualification, civil money penalty or fine; or, direct that the action under review be reversed. The designated reviewer may change a disqualification of a firm to a civil money penalty if the disqualification would cause a hardship to participating households (except in the case of a permanent disqualification). The designated reviewer, working with the appropriate FNS office, shall determine if circumstances warrant a civil money penalty in accordance with § 278.6 of this chapter.

(d) *Review of denial of claim.* In the case of a request for review of a denial of all or part of a claim of a firm, the determination of the designated reviewer shall sustain the action under review or shall specify the amount of the claim to be paid by FNS.

(e) *Determination notifications.* FNS shall notify the firm of the determination. Such notification will be sent to the representative of the firm who filed the request for review.

(f) *Effective date.* The determination of the designated reviewer shall take effect 30 days after the date of delivery of the determination to the firm.

[Amdt. 136, 43 FR 43279, Sept. 22, 1978, as amended by Amdt. 334, 57 FR 3913, Feb. 3, 1992; Amdt. 356, 59 FR 29714, June 9, 1994. Redesignated and amended at 68 FR 41053, July 10, 2003]