

§ 1262.302 Answer to application.

(a) Within 30 calendar days after service of an application, counsel representing the agency against which an award is sought may file an answer to the application. Unless agency counsel requests an extension of time for filing or files a statement of intent to negotiate under paragraph (b) of this section, failure to file an answer within the 30-day period may be treated as a consent to the award requested.

(b) If agency counsel and the applicant believe that the issues in the fee application can be settled, they may jointly file a statement of their intent to negotiate a settlement. The filing of this statement shall extend the time for filing an answer for an additional 30 calendar days, and further extensions may be granted by the adjudicative officer upon request by agency counsel and the applicant.

(c) The answer shall explain in detail any objections to the award requested and identify the facts relied on in support of agency counsel's position. If the answer is based on any alleged facts not already in the record of the proceeding, agency counsel shall include with the answer either supporting affidavits or a request for further proceedings under § 1262.306.

§ 1262.303 Reply.

Within 15 calendar days after service of an answer, the applicant may file a reply. If the reply is based on any alleged facts not already in the record of the proceeding, the applicant shall include with the reply either supporting affidavits or a request for further proceedings under § 1262.306.

§ 1262.304 Comments by other parties.

Any party to a proceeding other than the applicant and agency counsel may file comments about an application within 30 calendar days after it is served, or about an answer within 15 calendar days after it is served. A commenting party may not participate further in proceedings on the application unless the adjudicative officer determines that the public interest requires such participation in order to permit full exploration of matters raised in the comments.

§ 1262.305 Settlement.

The applicant and agency counsel may agree on a proposed settlement of the award before final action on the application, either in connection with a settlement of the underlying proceeding, or after the underlying proceeding has been concluded. If a prevailing party and agency counsel agree on a proposed settlement of an award before an application has been filed, the application shall be filed with the proposed settlement.

§ 1262.306 Further proceedings.

(a) Ordinarily, the determination of an award will be made on the basis of the written record. However, on request of either the applicant or agency counsel, or on his or her own initiative, the adjudicative officer may order further proceedings, such as an informal conference, oral argument, additional written submissions, or, as to issues other than substantial justification (such as the applicant's eligibility or substantiation of fees and expenses), pertinent discovery or an evidentiary hearing. Such further proceedings shall be held only when necessary for full and fair resolution of the issues arising from the application, and shall be conducted as promptly as possible.

(b) A request that the adjudicative officer order further proceedings under this section shall specifically identify the information sought or the disputed issues and shall explain why the additional proceedings are necessary to resolve the issues.

§ 1262.307 Decision.

(a) The adjudicative officer shall issue an initial decision on the application with 90 calendar days after completion of proceedings on the application. The decision shall include written findings and conclusions on such of the following as are relevant to the decision:

- (1) The applicant's eligibility and status as a prevailing party;
- (2) Whether the Agency's position was substantially justified;
- (3) Whether the applicant unreasonably protracted the proceedings, or whether special circumstances make an award unjust; and

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(4) The amounts, if any, awarded for fees and expenses with an explanation of the reasons for any difference between the amount requested and the amount awarded. Further, if the applicant has sought an award against more than one agency, the decision shall allocate responsibility for payment of any award made among the agencies, and shall explain the reasons for the allocation made.

(b) When the Agency appeals the underlying merits of an adversary adjudication, no decision on an application for fees and other expenses in connection with that adversary adjudication shall be made until a final and unreviewable decision is rendered by the court on the appeal or until the underlying merits of the case have been finally determined pursuant to the appeal.

[51 FR 15311, Apr. 23, 1986, as amended at 60 FR 12669, Mar. 8, 1995]

§ 1262.308 Agency review.

(a) Within 30 calendar days of the receipt of the adjudicative officer's initial decision on the fee application, either the applicant or agency counsel may seek Agency review of the decision; or, the NASA Administrator, upon the recommendation of the General Counsel or other designee, may decide to review the decision based on the record. Whether to review a decision is solely a matter within the discretion of the NASA Administrator. A 15-day notice of such review will be given the applicant and agency counsel, and a determination made not later than 45 days from the date of notice. The Administrator may make a final determination concerning the application or remand the application to the adjudicative officer for further proceedings.

(b) If neither the applicant nor agency counsel seek review, and the NASA Administrator does not on own initiative take a review, the adjudicative officer's initial decision on the fee application shall be the final administrative decision of the Agency 45 days after it is issued.

§ 1262.309 Judicial review.

Judicial review of final Agency decisions on awards may be sought under 5 U.S.C. 504(c)(2), which provides: If a

party other than the United States is dissatisfied with a determination of fees and other expenses made under [this part], that party may, within 30 days after the [final administrative] determination is made, appeal the determination to the court of the United States having jurisdiction to review the merits of the underlying decision of the agency adversary adjudication. The court's determination of any appeal heard under this [authority] shall be based solely on the factual record made before the agency. The court may modify the determination of fees and other expenses only if the court finds that the failure to make an award of fees and other expenses, or the calculation of the amount of the award, was unsupported by the substantial evidence.

[51 FR 15311, Apr. 23, 1986, as amended at 60 FR 12669, Mar. 8, 1995]

§ 1262.310 Payment of award.

(a) An applicant seeking payment of an award shall submit to the paying agency a copy of the Agency's final decision granting the award, accompanied by a statement that the applicant will not seek review of the decision in the United States courts. The submission to NASA should be addressed as follows:

Director, Financial Management Division,
NASA Headquarters, Washington, DC 20546.

(b) The Agency will pay the amount awarded to the applicant within 60 days, if feasible, unless judicial review of the award or of the underlying decision of the adversary adjudication has been sought by the applicant or any other party to the proceeding.

PART 1263—DEMAND FOR INFORMATION OR TESTIMONY SERVED ON AGENCY EMPLOYEES; PROCEDURES

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- 1263.101 Definitions.
- 1263.102 Procedure when a demand is issued in a legal proceeding involving the United States.
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