

its position was reasonable in law and fact.

(2) When two or more matters are joined together for one hearing, each of which could have been heard separately (without regard to laws or rules fixing a jurisdictional minimum amount for claims), and an applicant has prevailed with respect to one or several of the matters, an eligible applicant may receive an award for expenses associated only with the matters on which it prevailed if the Department's position on those matters was not substantially justified.

(3) Awards for fees and expenses incurred before the date on which a proceeding was initiated will be made only if the applicant can demonstrate that they were reasonably incurred in preparation for the proceeding.

(4) Awards will be reduced or denied if the applicant has unduly or unreasonably protracted the proceeding or if other special circumstances make an award unjust.

(c) *Awards where the Department's demand was substantially excessive and unreasonable.* (1) Awards will be made on this basis only where the adversary adjudication arises from the Department's action to enforce a party's compliance with a statutory or regulatory requirement. An award may be made on this basis only if the Department's demand that led to the proceeding was substantially in excess of the ultimate decision in the proceeding, and that demand is unreasonable when compared with that decision, given all the facts and circumstances of the case.

(2) Any award made on this basis shall be limited to the fees and expenses that are primarily related to defending against the excessive nature of the demand. An award shall not include fees and expenses that are primarily related to defending against the merits of charges, or fees and expenses that are primarily related to defending against the portion of the demand that was not excessive, to the extent that these fees and expenses are distinguishable from the fees and expenses primarily related to defending against the excessive nature of the demand.

(3) Awards will be denied if the party has committed a willful violation of law or otherwise acted in bad faith, or

if special circumstances make an award unjust.

[48 FR 45252, Oct. 4, 1983, as amended at 69 FR 2846, Jan. 21, 2004]

§ 13.6 Allowable fees and expenses.

(a) Awards will be limited to the rates customarily charged by persons engaged in the business of acting as attorneys, agents and expert witnesses. If a party has already received, or is eligible to receive, reimbursement for any expenses under another statutory provision or another program allowing reimbursement, its award under these rules must be reduced by the amount the prevailing party has already received, or is eligible to receive, from the Federal government.

(b) An award for the fees of an attorney or agent may not exceed \$125.00 per hour, regardless of the actual rate charged by the attorney or agent. An award for the fees of an expert witness may not exceed the highest rate at which the Department pays expert witnesses, which is \$24.09 per hour, regardless of the actual rates charged by the witness. These limits apply only to fees; an award may include the reasonable expenses of the attorney, agent, or witness as a separate item, if the attorney, agent or witness ordinarily charges separately for such expenses.

(c) In determining the reasonableness of the fees sought for attorneys, agents or expert witnesses, the adjudicative officer must consider factors bearing on the request, which include, but are not limited to:

(1) If the attorney, agent or witness is in private practice, his or her customary fee for like services; if the attorney, agent or witness is an employee of the applicant, the fully allocated cost of service;

(2) The prevailing rate for similar services in the community in which the attorney, agent or witness ordinarily performs services;

(3) The time actually spent in the representation of the applicant;

(4) The time reasonably spent in light of the difficulty or complexity of the issues in the proceeding; and

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(5) Such other factors as may bear on the value of the services provided.

[48 FR 45252, Oct. 4, 1983, as amended at 69 FR 2846, Jan. 21, 2004]

§ 13.7 Studies, exhibits, analyses, engineering reports, tests and projects.

The reasonable cost (or the reasonable portion of the cost) for any study, exhibit, analysis, engineering report, test, project or similar matter prepared on behalf of a party may be awarded to the extent that:

(a) The charge for the service does not exceed the prevailing rate payable for similar services,

(b) The study or other matter was necessary to the preparation for the administrative proceeding, and

(c) The study or other matter was prepared for use in connection with the administrative proceeding. No award will be made for a study or other matter which was necessary to satisfy statutory or regulatory requirements, or which would ordinarily be conducted as part of the party's business irrespective of the administrative proceeding.

Subpart B—Information Required from Applicants

§ 13.10 Contents of application.

(a) Applications for an award of fees and expenses must include:

(1) The name of the applicant and the identification of the proceeding;

(2) Where an award is sought on the basis stated in § 13.5(b) of this part, a declaration that the applicant believes it has prevailed, and an identification of the position of the Department that the applicant alleges was not substantially justified. Where an award is sought on the basis stated in § 13.5(c) of this part, an identification of the statutory or regulatory requirement that the applicant alleges the Department was seeking to enforce, and an identification of the Department's demand and of the document or documents containing that demand;

(3) Unless the applicant is an individual, a statement of the number of its employees on the date on which the proceeding was initiated, and a brief description of the type and purpose of its organization or business. However,

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where an award is sought solely on the basis stated in § 13.5(c) of this part, the applicant need not state the number of its employees;

(4) A description of any affiliated individuals or entities, as the term "affiliate" is defined in § 13.4(f), or a statement that none exist;

(5) A statement that the applicant's net worth as of the date on which the proceeding was initiated did not exceed the appropriate limits as stated in § 13.4(b) of this part. However, an applicant may omit this statement if:

(i) It attaches a copy of a ruling by the Internal Revenue Service that it qualifies as an organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3)) or, in the case of a tax-exempt organization not required to obtain a ruling from the Internal Revenue Service on its exempt status, a statement that describes the basis for the applicant's belief that it qualified under such section;

(ii) It states that it is a cooperative association as defined in section 15(a) of the Agricultural Marketing Act (12 U.S.C. 1141j(a)); or

(iii) It states that it is applying for an award solely on the basis stated in § 13.5(c) of this part, and that it is a small entity as defined in 5 U.S.C. 601, and it describes the basis for its belief that it qualifies as a small entity under that section.

(6) A statement of the amount of fees and expenses for which an award is sought;

(7) A declaration that the applicant has not received, has not applied for, and does not intend to apply for reimbursement of the cost of items listed in the Statement of Fees and Expenses under any other program or statute; or if the applicant has received or applied for or will receive or apply for reimbursement of those expenses under another program or statute, a statement of the amount of reimbursement received or applied for or intended to be applied for; and

(8) Any other matters the applicant wishes the Department to consider in determining whether and in what amount an award should be made.

(b) All applications must be signed by the applicant or by an authorized officer or attorney of the applicant. It