

§ 15.95

a hearing, the hearing will be either continued under a substitute hearing officer, or terminated and tried de novo in the discretion of the Secretary. In the absence of the designated hearing officer any hearing examiner may rule on motions and other interlocutory papers.

§ 15.95 Responsibilities and duties of hearing officer.

The hearing officer shall have the duty to conduct a fair hearing, to take all necessary action to avoid delay, and to maintain order. He shall have all powers necessary to these ends, including (but not limited to) the power to:

- (a) Arrange and issue notice of the date, time and place of hearings, or, upon due notice to the parties, to change the date, time and place of hearings previously set.
- (b) Hold conferences to settle, simplify, or fix the issues in a proceeding, or to consider other matters that may aid in the expeditious disposition of the proceeding.
- (c) Require parties and interveners to state their position with respect to the various issues in the proceeding.
- (d) Administer oaths and affirmations.
- (e) Rule on motions, and other procedural items on matters pending before him.
- (f) Regulate the course of the hearing and conduct of parties therein.
- (g) Examine witnesses and direct witnesses to testify.
- (h) Receive, rule on, exclude or limit evidence.
- (i) Fix the time for filing motions, petitions, briefs, or other items in matters pending before him.
- (j) In accordance with his authority issue an initial decision, or recommended findings and proposed decision, or final decision.
- (k) Take any other action a hearing officer is authorized to take under these rules or subpart A of this part.

MOTIONS

§ 15.101 Form and content.

(a) *General.* Motions shall state the relief sought and the authority relied upon. If made before or after the hearing, the motion shall be in writing and

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filed with the hearing clerk with a copy to all parties. If made at the hearing, they should be stated orally but the hearing officer may require that any motion be reduced to writing and filed and served on all parties in the same manner as a formal motion.

(b) *Extension of time or postponement.*

A request for an extension of time should be filed and served on all parties and should set forth the reasons for the request and may be granted upon a showing of good cause. Answers to such requests are permitted, if made promptly.

§ 15.102 Responses to motions.

Within 8 days or such reasonable time as may be fixed by the hearing officer, or Secretary, if the motion is properly addressed to him, any party may file a response to the motion, unless the motion is made at a hearing in which case an immediate response may be required. The hearing officer may dispose of motions at a prehearing conference.

§ 15.103 Disposition of motions.

The hearing officer may not sustain or grant a motion prior to expiration of the time for filing responses thereto, but may overrule or deny such motion without waiting on a response: *Provided, however,* That prehearing conferences, hearings, and decisions need not be delayed pending disposition of motions. Oral motions may be ruled on immediately. Motions submitted to the hearing officer not disposed of in separate rulings or in his decision will be deemed denied. Oral argument shall not be held on written motions unless expressly ordered. Interlocutory appeals from rulings on motions shall be governed by § 15.123.

HEARING PROCEDURES

§ 15.110 Prehearing conferences.

- (a) In any case in which it appears that such procedure will expedite the proceeding, the hearing officer may, prior to the commencement of the hearing, request the parties to meet with him or to correspond with him regarding any of the following:
 - (1) Simplification and clarification of the issues;