

## § 958.5

evidence to be offered in such place; (b) the names and addresses of the witnesses who will testify; (c) the reasons why such evidence cannot be produced at Arlington, VA. The presiding officer shall give consideration to the convenience and necessity of the parties and the relevancy of the evidence to be offered.

[36 FR 11578, June 16, 1971, as amended at 38 FR 17217, June 29, 1973; 63 FR 66052, Dec. 1, 1998]

### § 958.5 Election as to hearing.

If both parties so elect, they may waive an oral hearing and submit the matter for decision on the basis of the appeal and answer, with the approval of the presiding officer and subject to the right of the presiding officer to require the parties to furnish such further evidence or such briefs as the presiding officer may deem necessary. The request to waive oral hearing shall be mailed to the presiding officer not later than 10 days prior to the date set for the hearing.

### § 958.6 Default.

If a person who has not waived oral hearing fails, without notice or without adequate cause, satisfactory to the presiding officer, to appear at the hearing, the presiding officer shall issue an order dismissing the appeal. If no protest to such order of dismissal is received within 10 days from the date of issuance of the order, such order shall become final. Any protest to the order of dismissal received within 10 days from the date of its issuance shall be given such consideration as the presiding officer deems to be warranted by the facts and circumstances alleged in the protest. An order of dismissal issued under this section by an Administrative Law Judge may be appealed to the Judicial Officer within 10 days from the date of the order.

[36 FR 11578, June 16, 1971, as amended by 42 FR 30504, June 15, 1977]

### § 958.7 Presiding officers.

The presiding officer at any hearing shall be an Administrative Law Judge qualified in accordance with law, or the Judicial Officer (39 U.S.C. 204). The Chief Administrative Law Judge shall

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assign cases to Administrative Law Judges by rotation so far as practicable. The Judicial Officer may, for good cause shown, preside at the reception of evidence in proceedings where expedited hearings are requested by either party. When the Judicial Officer presides at the hearing, he shall, in his sole discretion, render a tentative or final decision after the conclusion of the hearing. Exceptions may be filed to a tentative decision in accordance with § 958.10.

[36 FR 11578, June 16, 1971, as amended at 38 FR 20263, July 30, 1973; 42 FR 30504, June 15, 1977]

### § 958.8 Proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law.

Unless otherwise ordered by the presiding officer, proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law and supporting arguments shall be submitted orally or in writing at the conclusion of the hearing.

### § 958.9 Initial decision.

Unless given orally at the conclusion of the hearing, the Administrative Law Judge shall render an initial decision as expeditiously as practicable following the conclusion of the hearing, and the receipt of the proposed findings, if any. The initial decision shall become the final agency decision if a timely appeal is not taken.

### § 958.10 Appeal.

Either party may file exceptions in a brief on appeal to the Judicial Officer within 5 days after receipt of the initial or tentative decision unless additional time is granted. A reply brief may be filed within 5 days after the receipt of the appeal brief by the opposing party.

### § 958.11 Final agency decision.

The Judicial Officer shall render a final agency decision or he shall refer the matter to the Postmaster General or the Deputy Postmaster General for such final decision. The decision shall be served upon the parties and upon the postmaster at the office where the box is located.