

(6) Hold or provide for the holding of conferences to settle or simplify the issues by consent of the parties;

(7) Receive and consider oral or written arguments on facts or law;

(8) Make initial decisions;

(9) Adopt rules of procedure and modify them from time to time as occasion requires for the orderly disposition of proceedings; and

(10) Perform acts and take measures as necessary to promote the efficient conduct of any proceeding.

§ 8.63 Hearings.

(a) *Conduct.* The Administrative Law Judge shall preside at the hearing on a complaint for the disbarment or suspension of an attorney, certified public accountant, or enrolled practitioner. Hearings will be stenographically recorded and transcribed and the testimony of witnesses will be received under oath or affirmation. The Administrative Law Judge shall conduct hearings pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 556.

(b) *Failure to appear.* If either party to the proceedings fails to appear at the hearing, after due notice has been sent, the Administrative Law Judge may deem them to have waived the right to a hearing and may make a decision against the absent party by default.

§ 8.64 Evidence.

(a) *Rules of evidence.* The rules of evidence prevailing in courts of law and equity are not controlling in hearings. However, the Administrative Law Judge shall exclude evidence which is irrelevant, immaterial, or unduly repetitious.

(b) *Depositions.* Depositions of witnesses taken pursuant to § 8.65 may be admitted as evidence.

(c) *Government documents.* Official documents, records, and papers of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and the Office of the Director of Practice are admissible in evidence without the production of an officer or employee to authenticate them. These documents, records and papers may be evidenced by a copy attested or identified by an officer or employee of the Bureau or the Treasury Department.

(d) *Exhibits.* If any document, record, or other paper is introduced in evi-

dence as an exhibit, the Administrative Law Judge may authorize the withdrawal of the exhibit subject to any conditions he or she deems proper.

(e) *Objections.* Objections to evidence will be in short form, stating the grounds of objection and the record may not include arguments thereon, except as ordered by the Administrative Law Judge. Rulings on objections will be a part of the record. No exception to the ruling is necessary to preserve the rights of the parties.

§ 8.65 Depositions.

Depositions for use at a hearing may, with the written approval of the Administrative Law Judge, be taken by either the Director of Practice or the respondent or their authorized representatives. Depositions may be taken upon oral or written questioning, upon not less than 10 days' written notice to the other party before any officer authorized to administer an oath for general purposes or before an officer or employee of the Bureau authorized to administer an oath pursuant to 27 CFR 70.35. The written notice will state the names of the witnesses and the time and place where the depositions are to be taken. The requirement of 10 days' notice may be waived by the parties in writing, and depositions may then be taken from the persons and at the times and places mutually agreed to by the parties. When a deposition is taken upon written questioning, any cross-examination will be upon written questioning. Copies of the written questioning will be served upon the other party with the notice, and copies of any written cross-interrogation will be mailed or delivered to the opposing party at least 5 days before the date of taking the depositions, unless the parties mutually agree otherwise. A party on whose behalf a deposition is taken must file it with the Administrative Law Judge and serve one copy upon the opposing party. Expenses in the reproduction of depositions will be borne by the party at whose instance the deposition is taken.

§ 8.66 Transcript.

In cases in which the hearing is stenographically reported by a Government contract reporter, copies of the