

§ 1503.601

(5) Dismiss the interlocutory appeal and preclude further appeal on that issue by the party who filed the appeal until an initial decision has been entered on the record.

(6) Dismiss the appeal of the ALJ's initial decision to the TSA decision maker.

Subpart F [Reserved]

Subpart G—Rules of Practice in TSA Civil Penalty Actions

§ 1503.601 Applicability.

(a) This subpart applies to a civil penalty action in which the requirements of paragraphs (a)(1) through (a)(3) of this section are satisfied.

(1) There is an alleged violation of a TSA requirement.

(2) The amount in controversy does not exceed—

(i) \$50,000 if the violation was committed by an individual or a small business concern;

(ii) \$400,000 if the violation was committed by any other person.

(3) The person charged with the violation has requested a hearing in accordance with §1503.427 of this part.

(b) This subpart does not apply to the adjudication of the validity of any TSA rule or other requirement under the U.S. Constitution, the Administrative Procedure Act, or any other law.

§ 1503.603 Separation of functions.

(a) Civil penalty proceedings, including hearings, will be prosecuted only by an agency attorney, except to the extent another agency official is permitted to issue and prosecute civil penalties under §1503.421 of this part.

(b) An agency employee engaged in the performance of investigative or prosecutorial functions in a civil penalty action must not, in that case or a factually related case, participate or give advice in a decision by the ALJ or by the TSA decision maker on appeal, except as counsel or a witness in the public proceedings.

(c) The Chief Counsel or an agency attorney not covered by paragraph (b) of this section will advise the TSA decision maker regarding an initial deci-

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sion or any appeal of a civil penalty action to the TSA decision maker.

§ 1503.605 Appearances and rights of parties.

(a) Any party may appear and be heard in person.

(b) Any party may be accompanied, represented, or advised by an attorney or representative designated by the party and may be examined by that attorney or representative in any proceeding governed by this subpart. An attorney or representative who represents a respondent and has not previously filed a pleading in the matter must file a notice of appearance in the action, in the manner provided in §1503.429, and must serve a copy of the notice of appearance on each party, in the manner provided in §1503.409, before participating in any proceeding governed by this subpart. The attorney or representative must include the name, address, and telephone number of the attorney or representative in the notice of appearance.

§ 1503.607 Administrative law judges.

(a) *Powers of an ALJ.* In accordance with the rules of this subpart, an ALJ may:

(1) Give notice of, and hold, pre-hearing conferences and hearings.

(2) Issue scheduling orders and other appropriate orders regarding discovery or other matters that come before him or her consistent with the rules of this subpart.

(3) Administer oaths and affirmations.

(4) Issue subpoenas authorized by law.

(5) Rule on offers of proof.

(6) Receive relevant and material evidence.

(7) Regulate the course of the hearing in accordance with the rules of this subpart.

(8) Hold conferences to settle or to simplify the issues on his or her own motion or by consent of the parties.

(9) Rule on procedural motions and requests.

(10) Make findings of fact and conclusions of law, and issue an initial decision.

(11) Strike unsigned documents unless omission of the signature is corrected promptly after being called to the attention of the attorney or party.

(12) Order payment of witness fees in accordance with § 1503.649.

(b) *Limitations on the power of the ALJ.*

(1) The ALJ may not:

(i) Issue an order of contempt.

(ii) Award costs to any party.

(iii) Impose any sanction not specified in this subpart.

(iv) Adopt or follow a standard of proof or procedure contrary to that set forth in this subpart.

(v) Decide issues involving the validity of a TSA regulation, order, or other requirement under the U.S. Constitution, the Administrative Procedure Act, or other law.

(2) If the ALJ imposes any sanction not specified in this subpart, a party may file an interlocutory appeal of right pursuant to § 1503.631(c)(3).

(3) This section does not preclude an ALJ from issuing an order that bars a person from a specific proceeding based on a finding of obstreperous or disruptive behavior in that specific proceeding.

(c) *Disqualification.* The ALJ may disqualify himself or herself at any time. A party may file a motion, pursuant to § 1503.629(f)(6), requesting that an ALJ be disqualified from the proceedings.

§ 1503.609 Complaint.

(a) *Filing.* The agency attorney must file the complaint with the Enforcement Docket Clerk in accordance with § 1503.429, or may file a written motion pursuant to § 1503.629(f)(2)(i) instead of filing a complaint, not later than 30 days after receipt by the agency attorney of a request for hearing. The agency attorney should suggest a location for the hearing when filing the complaint.

(b) *Contents.* A complaint must set forth the facts alleged, any statute, regulation, or order allegedly violated by the respondent, and the proposed civil penalty in sufficient detail to provide notice of any factual or legal allegation and proposed civil penalty.

§ 1503.611 Answer.

(a) *Filing.* A respondent must file a written answer to the complaint in ac-

cordance with § 1503.429, or may file a written motion pursuant to § 1503.629(f)(1)–(4) instead of filing an answer, not later than 30 days after service of the complaint. Subject to paragraph (c) of this section, the answer may be in the form of a letter, but must be dated and signed by the person responding to the complaint. An answer may be typewritten or may be legibly handwritten. The person filing an answer should suggest a location for the hearing when filing the answer.

(b) *Contents.* An answer must specifically state any affirmative defense that the respondent intends to assert at the hearing. A person filing an answer may include a brief statement of any relief requested in the answer.

(c) *Specific denial of allegations required.* A person filing an answer must admit, deny, or state that the person is without sufficient knowledge or information to admit or deny, each numbered paragraph of the complaint. Any statement or allegation contained in the complaint that is not specifically denied in the answer may be deemed an admission of the truth of that allegation. A general denial of the complaint is deemed a failure to file an answer.

(d) *Failure to file answer.* A person's failure to file an answer without good cause, as determined by the ALJ, will be deemed an admission of the truth of each allegation contained in the complaint.

§ 1503.613 Consolidation and separation of cases.

(a) *Consolidation.* If two or more actions involve common questions of law or fact, the Chief Administrative Law Judge may do the following:

(1) Order a joint hearing or trial on any or all such questions.

(2) Order the consolidation of such actions.

(3) Otherwise make such orders concerning the proceedings as may tend to avoid unnecessary costs or delay.

(b) *Consolidation shall not affect the applicability of this part.* Consolidation of two or more actions that individually meet the jurisdictional amounts set forth in § 1503.601(a)(2) shall not cause the resulting consolidated action to come under the exclusive jurisdiction of the district courts of the United