

(m) Waive, suspend, or modify any rule in this subpart under §10.19 if the presiding officer determines that no party will be prejudiced, the ends of justice will be served, and the action is in accordance with law;

(n) Strike the participation of any person under §12.45(e) or exclude any person from the hearing under §12.90, or take other reasonable disciplinary action; and

(o) Take any action for the fair, expeditious, and orderly conduct of the hearing.

§ 12.75 Disqualification of presiding officer.

(a) A participant may request the presiding officer to disqualify himself/herself and withdraw from the proceeding. The ruling on any such request may be appealed in accordance with §12.97(b).

(b) A presiding officer who is aware of grounds for disqualification shall withdraw from the proceeding.

§ 12.78 Unavailability of presiding officer.

(a) If the presiding officer is unable to act for any reason, the Commissioner will assign the powers and duties to another presiding officer. The substitution will not affect the hearing, except as the new presiding officer may order.

(b) Any motion based on the substitution must be made within 10 days.

Subpart E—Hearing Procedures

§ 12.80 Filing and service of submissions.

(a) Submissions, including pleadings in a hearing, are to be filed with the Division of Dockets Management under §10.20 except that only two copies need be filed. To determine compliance with filing deadlines in a hearing, a submission is considered submitted on the date it is actually received by the Division of Dockets Management. When this part allows a response to a submission and prescribes a period of time for the filing of the response, an additional 3 days are allowed for the filing of the response if the submission is served by mail.

(b) The person making a submission shall serve copies of it on the other participants. Submissions of documentary data and information are not required to be served on each participant, but any accompanying transmittal letter, pleading, summary, statement of position, certification under paragraph (d) of this section, or similar document must be served on each participant.

(c) Service is accomplished by mailing a submission to the address shown in the notice of participation or by personal delivery.

(d) All submissions are to be accompanied by a certificate of service, or a statement that service is not required.

(e) No written submission or other portion of the administrative record may be held in confidence, except as provided in §12.105.

§ 12.82 Petition to participate in forma pauperis.

(a) A participant who believes that compliance with the filing and service requirements of this section constitutes an unreasonable financial burden may submit to the Commissioner a petition to participate in forma pauperis.

(b) The petition will be in the form specified in §10.30 except that the heading will be "Request to Participate in Forma Pauperis, Docket No. ____." Filing and service requirements for the petition are described in paragraph (c) of this section, whether or not the petition is granted. The petition must demonstrate that either: (1) The person is indigent and a strong public interest justifies participation, or (2) the person's participation is in the public interest because it can be considered of primary benefit to the general public.

(c) The Commissioner may grant or deny the petition. If the petition is granted, the participant need file only one copy of each submission with the Division of Dockets Management. The Division of Dockets Management will make sufficient additional copies for the administrative record, and serve a copy on each other participant.

§ 12.83 Advisory opinions.

Before or during a hearing, a person may, under §10.85, request the Commissioner for an advisory opinion on