

§ 13.2

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) joins other executive departments and independent establishments of the Government of the United States in using penalty mail to disseminate photographs and biographical information on hundreds of missing children.

[51 FR 19830, June 3, 1986; 51 FR 43608, Dec. 3, 1986]

§ 13.2 Procedures for obtaining and disseminating data.

(a) HUD shall insert, manually and via automated inserts, pictures and biographical data related to missing children in domestic penalty mail directed to members of the public in the United States, its territories and possessions. These include:

(1) Standard letter-size envelopes (4½" × 9½");

(2) Document-size envelopes (9½" × 12", 9½" × 11½", 10" × 13"); and

(3) Other envelopes (miscellaneous size).

(b) Missing children information shall not be placed on the *Penalty Indicia*, *OCR Read Area*, *Bar Code Read Area*, and *Return Address* areas of letter-size envelopes.

(c) Posters containing pictures and biographical data shall be placed on bulletin boards in Headquarters and Field offices.

(d) HUD shall accept camera-ready and other photographic and biographical materials solely from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (National Center). Photographs that were reasonably current as of the time of the child's disappearance shall be the only acceptable form of visual media or pictorial likeness used in penalty mail or posters.

§ 13.3 Withdrawal of data.

HUD shall remove all printed penalty mail envelopes and other materials from circulation or other use within a three month period from the date the National Center receives information or notice that a child, whose picture and biographical information have been made available to HUD, has been recovered or that the parent or guardian's permission to use the child's photograph and biographical information has been withdrawn. The HUD contact

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person shall be notified immediately and in writing by the National Center of the need to withdraw from circulation penalty mail envelopes and other materials related to a particular child.

§ 13.4 Reports.

HUD shall compile and submit to Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), by June 30, 1987, a consolidated report on its experience in implementing S. 1195 *Official Mail Use in the Location and Recovery of Missing Children* along with recommendations for future Departmental action.

PART 14—IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE ACT IN ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEEDINGS

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AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 504(c)(1); 42 U.S.C. 3535(d).

SOURCE: 52 FR 27126, July 17, 1987, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—General Provisions**§ 14.50 Definitions.**

Act. The Equal Access to Justice Act, 5 U.S.C. 504, title II of Pub. L. 96-481, as amended by Pub. L. 99-80.

Adjudicative officer. The Administrative Law Judge, Administrative Judge of the HUD Office of Hearings and Appeals, or other officer designated by the Secretary, who presided at the adversary adjudication.

Adversary adjudication. (a) An adjudication under 5 U.S.C. 554 in which the position of the United States is represented by counsel or otherwise, but not including an adjudication for the purpose of establishing or fixing a rate or for the purpose of granting or renewing a license; and

(b) Appeals of decisions of contracting officers made pursuant to section 6 of the Contract Disputes Act of 1978 (41 U.S.C. 605) before agency boards of contract appeals as provided in section 8 of that Act (41 U.S.C. 607).

Agency counsel (a) When the position of the Department is being represented, the attorney or attorneys designated by the Department's General Counsel to represent the Department in a proceeding covered by this part, and

(b) When the position of another agency of the United States is being represented, the representative as designated by that agency.

Department. The Department of Housing and Urban Development, or the organizational unit within the Department responsible for conducting an adversary adjudication subject to this part.

Proceeding. An adversary adjudication as defined above.

Secretary. The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

[52 FR 27126, July 17, 1987, as amended at 72 FR 53877, Sept. 20, 2007; 87 FR 8196, Feb. 14, 2022]

§ 14.100 Time computation.

Time periods stated in this part shall be computed in accordance with the Department's rules with respect to computation of time which apply to the underlying proceeding.

§ 14.105 Purpose of these rules.

The Act provides for the award of attorney fees and other expenses to eligible individuals and entities who are parties to certain administrative proceedings (*adversary adjudications*) before the Department. An eligible party may receive an award when it prevails over an agency, unless the agency's position was substantially justified or special circumstances make an award unjust. The rules in this part described the parties eligible for awards and the proceedings that are covered. They also explain how to apply for awards and the procedures and standards that the Department will use to make them.

§ 14.110 When the Act applies.

The Act applies to any adversary adjudication pending or commenced before this Department on or after August 5, 1985. It also applies to any adversary adjudication commenced on or after October 1, 1984, and finally disposed of before August 5, 1985, provided that an application for fees and expenses, as described in subpart B of these rules, has been filed with the Department no later than 30 days after August 5, 1985, and to any adversary adjudication pending on or commenced on or after October 1, 1981, in which an application for fees and other expenses was timely filed and was dismissed for lack of jurisdiction.

§ 14.115 Proceedings covered.

(a) The proceedings to which this part applies are adversary adjudications conducted by the Department under:

(1) The Interstate Land Sales Full Disclosure Act, as amended, 15 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 1715 and 24 CFR part 1720;

(2) Section 602 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d-1, and 24 CFR parts 1 and 2;

(3) Section 505(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, 29 U.S.C. 794a, 28 CFR part 41, and any applicable HUD regulations;

(4) Section 305(a) of the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, 42 U.S.C. 6104(a), 45 CFR part 90 and any applicable HUD regulations;

(5) [Reserved]

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(6) Debt Collection Act of 1982 (Salary Offset), 5 U.S.C. 5514, and 24 CFR 17.125–.140;

(7) Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1974, 42 U.S.C. 5401 *et seq.*, and 24 CFR part 3280;

(8) Section 111 of title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, 42 U.S.C. 5311, and 24 CFR 570.913;

(9) Appeals of decisions of contracting officers made pursuant to section 6 of the Contract Disputes Act of 1978 (41 U.S.C. 605) before the HUD Board of Contract Appeals as provided in section 8 of that Act (41 U.S.C. 607); or

(10) Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3600–3620) and 24 CFR part 104.

(b) The Department's failure to identify a type of proceeding as an adversary adjudication shall not preclude the filing of an application by a party who believes the proceeding is covered by the Act; whether the proceeding is covered will then be an issue for resolution in proceedings on the application.

(c) If a proceeding includes both matters covered by the Act and matters specifically excluded from coverage, any award made will include only fees and expenses related to covered issues.

[52 FR 27126, July 17, 1987, as amended at 54 FR 3283, Jan. 23, 1989; 85 FR 61562, Sept. 29, 2020]

§ 14.120 Eligibility of applicants.

(a) To be eligible for an award of attorney fees and other expenses under the Act, the applicant must be a party to the adversary adjudication for which it seeks an award. The term *party* is defined in 5 U.S.C. 551(3). The applicant must show that it meets all conditions of eligibility set out in this subpart and in subpart B.

(b) The types of eligible applicants are as follows:

(1) An individual with a net worth of not more than \$2 million;

(2) The sole owner of an unincorporated business who has a net worth of not more than \$7 million, including both personal and business interests, and not more than 500 employees;

(3) A charitable or other tax-exempt organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code,

26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3), with not more than 500 employees;

(4) A cooperative association as defined in section 15(a) of the Agricultural Marketing Act, 12 U.S.C. 1141j(a), with not more than 500 employees; or

(5) Any other partnership, corporation, association, unit of local government, or organization with a net worth of not more than \$7 million and not more than 500 employees.

(c) For the purpose of eligibility, the net worth and number of employees of an applicant shall be determined as of the date the proceeding was initiated. For the purpose of eligibility of applicants before the HUD Board of Contract Appeals, the net worth and number of employees of an applicant shall be determined as of the date the applicant filed its appeal under 41 U.S.C. 606.

(d) An applicant who owns an unincorporated business will be considered as an *individual* rather than a *sole owner of an unincorporated business* if the issues on which the application prevails are related primarily to personal interests rather than to business interests.

(e) The employees of an applicant include all persons who regularly perform services for remuneration for the applicant, under the applicant's direction and control. Part-time employees shall be included on a proportional basis.

(f) The net worth and number of employees of the applicant and all of its affiliates shall be aggregated to determine eligibility. Any individual, corporation or other entity that directly or indirectly controls or owns a majority of the voting shares or other interests of the applicant, or any corporation or other entity of which the applicant directly or indirectly owns or controls a majority of the voting shares or other interest, will be considered an affiliate for purposes of this part, unless the adjudicative officer determines that such treatment would be unjust and contrary to the purposes of the Act in light of the actual relationship between the affiliated entities. In addition, the adjudicative officer may determine that financial relationships of the applicant other than those described in this paragraph constitute

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special circumstances that would make an award unjust.

(g) An applicant that participates in a proceeding primarily on behalf of one or more other persons or entities that would be ineligible is not itself eligible for an award.

§ 14.125 Standards for awards.

(a) A prevailing applicant may receive an award for fees and expenses incurred in connection with a proceeding, or in a significant and discrete substantive portion of the proceeding, unless the position of the agency over which the applicant has prevailed was substantially justified. The position of the agency includes, in addition to the position taken by the agency in the adversary adjudication, the action or failure to act by the agency upon which the adversary adjudication is based. The burden of proof that an award should not be made to an ineligible prevailing applicant because the agency's position was substantially justified is on the agency counsel, who may avoid an award by showing that its position was reasonable in law and fact.

(b) An award will be reduced or denied if the applicant has unduly or unreasonably protracted the proceeding, if the applicant has falsified the application (including documentation) or net worth exhibit or if special circumstances make the award sought unjust.

§ 14.130 Allowable fees and expenses.

(a) No award for the fee of an attorney or agent under these rules may exceed \$75.00 per hour. However, an award may also include the reasonable expenses of the attorney, agent or witness as a separate item, if the attorney, agent or witness ordinarily charges clients separately for such expenses.

(b) In determining the reasonableness of the fee sought for an attorney, agent or expert witness, the adjudicative officer shall consider the following:

(1) If the attorney, agent or witness is in private practice, his or her customary fee for similar services, or, if an employee of the applicant, the fully allocated cost of the services;

(2) The prevailing rate for the kind and quality of services furnished in the

community in which the attorney, agent or witness ordinarily performs services;

(3) The time actually spent in the representation of the applicant;

(4) The time reasonably spent in the light of the difficulty or complexity of the issues in the proceeding; and

(5) Such other factors as may bear on the value of the services provided.

(c) The reasonable cost of any study, analysis, engineering report, test, project, or similar matter prepared on behalf of a party may be awarded, to the extent that the charge for the services does not exceed the prevailing rate for similar services, and the study or other matter was necessary for preparation of the applicant's case.

§ 14.135 Rulemaking on maximum rates for attorney fees.

Any person may file with the Department a petition for rulemaking to increase the maximum rate for attorney fees as provided in 5 U.S.C. 504(b)(1)(A)(ii), in accordance with 24 CFR part 10. The petition should identify the rate the petitioner believes the Department should establish and the types of proceedings in which the rate should be used. It should also explain fully the reasons why the higher rate is warranted. The Department will respond to the petition in accordance with 24 CFR 10.20(b).

§ 14.140 Awards against other agencies.

If an applicant is entitled to an award because it prevails over another agency of the United States that participates in a proceeding before the Department and takes a position that is not substantially justified, the award or an appropriate portion of the award shall be made against that agency.

Subpart B—Information Required From Applicants

§ 14.200 Contents of application.

(a) An application for an award of fees and expenses under the Act shall identify the applicant and the proceeding for which an award is sought. The application shall show that the applicant has prevailed and identify the position of the Department or other

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agencies that the applicant alleges was not substantially justified. Unless the applicant is an individual, the application shall also state the number of employees of the applicant and describe briefly the type and purpose of its organization or business.

(b) The application shall also include a statement that the applicant's net worth does not exceed \$2 million (if an individual) or \$7 million (for all other applicants, including their affiliates). However, an applicant may omit this statement if:

(1) It attaches a copy of a ruling by the Internal Revenue Service that it qualifies as an organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3), or, in the case of a tax-exempt organization not required to obtain a ruling from the Internal Revenue Service on its exempt status, a statement that describes the basis for the applicant's belief that it qualifies under such section; or

(2) It states that it is a cooperative association as defined in section 15(a) of the Agricultural Marketing Act, 12 U.S.C. 1141j(a).

(c) If the applicant is a partnership, corporation, association, or organization, or a sole owner of an unincorporated business, the applicant shall state that it did not have more than 500 employees at the time the proceeding was initiated, giving the number of its employees and describing briefly the type and purpose of its organization or business.

(d) The application shall also itemize the amount of fees and expenses for which an award is sought.

(e) The application also may include any other matters that the applicant wishes the Department to consider in determining whether and in what amount an award should be made.

(f) The application shall be signed by the applicant or an authorized officer with respect to the eligibility of the applicant and by the attorney of the applicant with respect to fees and expenses sought. The application shall contain or be accompanied by a written verification under oath or affirmation under penalty of perjury that the information provided in the application and all accompanying material is true and complete to the best of the applicant's

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or authorized officer's information and belief.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 2510-0001)

§ 14.205 Net worth exhibit.

(a) Each applicant except a qualified tax-exempt organization or a qualified cooperative association must submit with its application a detailed exhibit showing the net worth of the applicant and any affiliates (as defined in §14.120(f) of this part) when the proceeding was initiated. The exhibit may be in any form convenient to the applicant that provides full disclosure of the applicant's and its affiliates' assets and liabilities, and is sufficient to determine whether the applicant qualifies under the standards of the Act and this part. The adjudicative officer may require an applicant to file additional information to determine its eligibility for an award.

(b) The net worth exhibit shall describe any transfers of assets from, or obligations incurred by, the applicant or any affiliate, occurring in the one-year period before the date on which the proceeding was initiated, that reduced the net worth of the applicant and its affiliates below the applicable net worth ceiling. If there were no such transactions, the applicant shall so state.

(c) Ordinarily, the net worth exhibit will be included in the public record of the proceeding. However, an applicant that objects to public disclosure of information in any portion of the exhibit and believes there are legal grounds for withholding it from disclosure may submit that portion of the exhibit directly to the adjudicative officer in a sealed envelope labeled "Confidential Financial Information," accompanied by a motion to withhold the information from public disclosure. The motion shall describe the information sought to be withheld and explain, in detail, why it falls within one or more of the specific exemptions from mandatory disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552(b) (1)-(9)), why public disclosure of the information would adversely affect the applicant, and why disclosure is not required in the public interest. The material in question shall be served on

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counsel representing the agency against which the applicant seeks an award, but need not be served on any other party to the proceeding. If the adjudicative officer finds that the information should not be withheld from disclosure, it shall be placed in the public record of the proceeding. Otherwise, any request to inspect or copy the exhibit shall be disposed of in accordance with the Department's established procedures under the Freedom of Information Act, 24 CFR part 15. In either case, disclosure shall be subject to the provisions of the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. 552a, and the Department's procedures implementing the Privacy Act of 1974 at 24 CFR part 16.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 2510-0001)

§ 14.210 Documentation of fees and expenses.

(a) The application shall be accompanied by full and itemized documentation of the fees and expenses, including the cost of any study, analysis, engineering report, test, project or similar matter, for which an award is sought.

(b) The documentation shall include an affidavit from any attorney, agent or expert witness representing or appearing in behalf of the party, stating the actual time expended and the rate at which fees and other expenses were computed and describing the specific services performed.

(c) The documentation shall also include a description of any expenses for which reimbursement is sought and a statement of the amounts paid and payable by the applicant or by any other person or entity for the services provided. Vouchers, receipts, logs, or other substantiation for any expenses paid or payable shall be provided.

(d) The adjudicative officer may require the applicant to provide additional substantiation for any expenses claimed.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 2510-0001)

§ 14.215 When an application may be filed.

(a) An application may be filed whenever the applicant has prevailed in the proceeding or in a significant and discrete substantive portion of the pro-

ceeding, but in no case later than 30 days after the Department's final disposition of the proceeding.

(b) For purposes of this rule, final disposition means the date on which a decision or order disposing of the merits of the proceeding or any other complete resolution of the proceeding, such as a settlement of voluntary dismissal, become final and unappealable, both within the Department and to the courts.

(c) If review or reconsideration (under HUD Board of Contract Appeals Rule 29, 24 CFR 20.10) is sought or taken of a decision as to which an applicant believes it has prevailed, proceedings for the award of fees shall be stayed pending final disposition of the underlying controversy. When the United States appeals the underlying merits of an adversary adjudication to a court, no decision on an application for fees and other expenses in connection with that adversary adjudication shall be made until a final and unreviewable decision is rendered by the court on the appeal or until the underlying merits of the case have been finally determined pursuant to the appeal.

Subpart C—Procedures for Considering Applications

§ 14.300 Jurisdiction of adjudicative officer.

Any provision in the Department's rules and regulations other than this part which limits or terminates the jurisdiction of an adjudicative officer upon the effective date of his or her decision in the underlying proceeding shall not in any way affect his or her jurisdiction to render a decision under this part.

§ 14.305 Filing and service of documents.

Any application for an award or other pleading or document related to an application shall be filed and served on all parties to the proceeding in the same manner as other pleadings in the proceeding, except as provided in § 14.205(c) for confidential financial information.

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§ 14.310 Answer to application.

(a) Within 30 days after service of an application, agency counsel may file an answer to the application. Agency counsel may request an extension of time for filing. If agency counsel fails to answer or otherwise fails to contest or settle the application, the adjudicative officer, upon a satisfactory showing of entitlement by the applicant, may make an award for the applicant's fees and other expenses under the Act.

(b) If agency counsel and the applicant believe that the issues in the fee application can be settled, they may jointly file a statement of their intent to negotiate a settlement. The filing of this statement shall extend the time for filing an answer for an additional 30 days, and further extensions may be granted by the adjudicative officer upon request by agency counsel and the applicant.

(c) The answer shall explain in detail any objections to the award requested and identify the facts relied on in support of agency counsel's position. If the answer is based on any alleged facts not already in the record of the proceeding, agency counsel shall include with the answer either supporting affidavits or a request for further proceedings under § 14.325.

§ 14.315 Comments by other parties.

Any party to a proceeding other than the applicant and agency counsel may file comments on an application within 30 days after it is served, or on an answer within 15 days after it is served. A commenting party may not participate further in proceedings on the application unless the adjudicative officer determines that the public interest requires such participation in order to permit full exploration of matters raised in the comments.

§ 14.320 Settlement.

The applicant and agency counsel may agree on a proposed settlement of the award before final action on the application, either in connection with a settlement of the underlying proceeding, or after the underlying proceeding has been concluded, in accordance with the settlement procedure applicable to the underlying proceeding. If a prevailing party and agency coun-

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sel agree on a proposed settlement of an award before an application has been filed, the application shall be filed with the proposed settlement.

§ 14.325 Extensions of time and further proceedings.

(a) The adjudicative officer on motion and for good cause shown may grant extensions of time other than for filing an application for fees and expenses after final disposition in the adversary adjudication.

(b) Ordinarily, the determination of an award will be made on the basis of the written record. However, on request of either the applicant or agency counsel, or on his or her own initiative, the adjudicative officer may order further proceedings, such as an informal conference, oral argument, additional written submissions, or as to issues other than substantial justification (such as the applicant's eligibility or substantiation of fees and expenses), pertinent discovery or an evidentiary hearing. Such further proceedings shall be held only when necessary for full and fair resolution of the issues arising from the application, and shall be conducted as promptly as possible. Whether or not the position of the agency was substantially justified shall be determined on the basis of the administrative record, as a whole, which is made in the adversary adjudication for which fees and other expenses are sought.

(c) A request that the adjudicative officer order further proceedings under this section shall specifically identify the information sought or the disputed issues and shall explain why the additional proceedings are necessary to resolve the issues.

§ 14.330 Decision.

The adjudicative officer shall issue an initial decision on the application within 30 days after completion of proceedings on the application. The decision shall include written findings and conclusions on such of the following as are relevant to the decision:

(a) The applicant's status as a prevailing party;

(b) The applicant's qualification as a party under 5 U.S.C. 504(b)(1)(B);

(c) Whether the agency's position was substantially justified;

(d) Whether special circumstances make an award unjust;

(e) Whether the applicant during the course of the proceedings engaged in conduct that unduly and unreasonably protracted the final resolution of the matter in controversy; and

(f) The amounts, if any, awarded for fees and other expenses, with reasons for any difference between the amount requested and the amount awarded.

If the applicant has sought an award against more than one agency, the decision shall allocate responsibility for payment of any award made among the agencies, and shall explain the reasons for the allocation made.

§ 14.335 Departmental review.

(a) Either the applicant or agency counsel may seek review of the initial decision on the fee application, or the Secretary (or his or her delegate, if any) may decide to review the decision on his or her own initiative, in accordance with the Department's review or appeals procedures applicable to the underlying proceeding. If neither the applicant nor agency counsel seeks review and the Secretary (or his or her delegate, if any) does not take review on his or her own initiative, the initial decision on the application shall become a final decision of the Department in the same manner as a decision in the underlying proceeding becomes final. Whether to review a decision is a matter within the discretion of the Secretary (or his or her delegate, if any). If review is taken, the Department will issue a final decision on the application or remand the application to the adjudicative officer for further proceedings.

(b) Either party may seek reconsideration of the decision on the fee application in accordance with Rule 29, 24 CFR 20.10.

§ 14.340 Judicial review.

Judicial review of final departmental decisions on awards may be sought as provided in 5 U.S.C. 504(c)(2).

§ 14.345 Payment of award.

An applicant seeking payment of an award shall submit a copy of the final

decision granting the award to: Director, Office of Finance and Accounting, Room 2202, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Washington, DC 20410, with a copy to: Associate General Counsel for Equal Opportunity and Administrative Law, Room 10244, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Washington, DC 20410. A statement that review of the underlying decision is not being sought in the United States courts, or that the process for seeking review of the award, if initiated, has been completed, must also be included. The agency will pay the amount awarded to the applicant within 60 days, unless judicial review of the award or of the underlying decision of the adversary adjudication has been sought by the applicant or any other party to the proceeding.

PART 15—PUBLIC ACCESS TO HUD RECORDS UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT AND TESTIMONY AND PRODUCTION OF INFORMATION BY HUD EMPLOYEES

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