

the factors set forth in § 501.737, the availability of another representative for the party or, if the representative was a counsel, of other members of a suspended counsel's firm.

(b) *Deficient filings; leave to cure deficiencies.* The Administrative Law Judge, or the Secretary's designee in the case of a request for review, may in his or her discretion, reject, in whole or in part, any filing that fails to comply with any requirements of this subpart or of any order issued in the proceeding in which the filing was made. Any such filings shall not be part of the record. The Administrative Law Judge or the Secretary's designee may direct a party to cure any deficiencies and to resubmit the filing within a fixed time period.

(c) *Failure to make required filing or to cure deficient filing.* The Administrative Law Judge (or the Secretary's designee during review proceedings) may enter a default pursuant to § 501.716, dismiss the case, decide the particular matter at issue against that person, or prohibit the introduction of evidence or exclude testimony concerning that matter if a person fails:

(1) To make a filing required under this subpart; or

(2) To cure a deficient filing within the time specified by the Administrative Law Judge or the Secretary's designee pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section.

(d) *Failure to make required filing or to cure deficient filing in the case of a request for review.* The Secretary's designee, in any case of a request for review, may decide the issue against that person, or prohibit the introduction of evidence or exclude testimony concerning that matter if a person fails:

(1) To make a filing required under this subpart; or

(2) To cure a deficient filing within the time specified by the Secretary's designee pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section.

§ 501.730 Depositions upon oral examination.

(a) *Procedure.* Any party desiring to take the testimony of a witness by deposition shall make a written motion setting forth the reasons why such deposition should be taken including the

specific reasons why the party believes the witness may be unable to attend or testify at the hearing; the name and address of the prospective witness; the matters concerning which the prospective witness is expected to be questioned; and the proposed time and place for the taking of the deposition.

(b) *Required finding when ordering a deposition.* In the discretion of the Administrative Law Judge, an order for deposition may be issued upon a finding that the prospective witness will likely give testimony material to the proceeding, that it is likely the prospective witness will be unable to attend or testify at the hearing because of age, sickness, infirmity, imprisonment or other disability, and that the taking of a deposition will serve the interests of justice.

(c) *Contents of order.* An order for deposition shall designate by name a deposition officer. The designated officer may be the Administrative Law Judge or any other person authorized to administer oaths by the laws of the United States or of the place where the deposition is to be held. An order for deposition also shall state:

(1) The name of the witness whose deposition is to be taken;

(2) The scope of the testimony to be taken;

(3) The time and place of the deposition;

(4) The manner of recording, preserving and filing the deposition; and

(5) The number of copies, if any, of the deposition and exhibits to be filed upon completion of the deposition.

(d) *Procedure at depositions.* A witness whose testimony is taken by deposition shall swear or affirm before any questions are put to him or her. Examination and cross-examination of witnesses may proceed as permitted at a hearing. A witness being deposed may have counsel or a representative present during the deposition.

(e) *Objections to questions or evidence.* Objections to questions or evidence shall be in short form, stating the grounds of objection relied upon. Objections to questions or evidence shall be noted by the deposition officer upon the deposition, but a deposition officer (other than an Administrative Law

Judge) shall not have the power to decide on the competency, materiality or relevance of evidence. Failure to object to questions or evidence before the deposition officer shall not be deemed a waiver unless the ground of the objection is one that might have been obviated or removed if presented at that time.

(f) *Filing of depositions.* The questions asked and all answers or objections shall be recorded or transcribed verbatim, and a transcript shall be prepared by the deposition officer, or under his or her direction. The transcript shall be subscribed by the witness and certified by the deposition officer. The original deposition transcript and exhibits shall be filed with the Administrative Law Judge. A copy of the deposition transcript and exhibits shall be served on the opposing party or parties. The cost of the transcript (including copies) shall be paid by the party requesting the deposition.

§ 501.731 Depositions upon written questions.

(a) *Availability.* Depositions may be taken and submitted on written questions upon motion of any party. The motion shall include the information specified in § 501.730(a). A decision on the motion shall be governed by § 501.730(b).

(b) *Procedure.* Written questions shall be filed with the motion. Not later than 10 days after service of the motion and written questions, any party may file objections to such written questions and any party may file cross-questions. When a deposition is taken pursuant to this section no persons other than the witness, representative or counsel to the witness, the deposition officer, and, if the deposition officer does not act as reporter, a reporter, shall be present at the examination of the witness. No party shall be present or represented unless otherwise permitted by order. The deposition officer shall propound the questions and cross-questions to the witness in the order submitted.

(c) *Additional requirements.* The order for deposition, filing of the deposition, form of the deposition and use of the deposition in the record shall be governed by paragraphs (b) through (g) of

§ 501.730, except that no cross-examination shall be made.

§ 501.732 Evidence.

The applicable evidentiary standard for proceedings under this subpart is proof by a preponderance of reliable, probative, and substantial evidence. The Administrative Law Judge shall admit any relevant and material oral, documentary, or demonstrative evidence. The Federal Rules of Evidence do not apply, by their own force, to proceedings under this subpart, but shall be employed as general guidelines. The fact that evidence submitted by a party is hearsay goes only to the weight of the evidence and does not affect its admissibility.

(a) *Objections and offers of proof—*(1) *Objections.* Objections to the admission or exclusion of evidence must be made on the record and shall be in short form, stating the grounds relied upon. Exceptions to any ruling thereon by the Administrative Law Judge need not be noted at the time of the ruling. Such exceptions will be deemed waived on review by the Secretary's designee, however, unless raised:

(i) Pursuant to interlocutory review in accordance with § 501.741;

(ii) In a proposed finding or conclusion filed pursuant to § 501.738; or

(iii) In a petition for the Secretary's designee's review of an Administrative Law Judge's decision filed in accordance with § 501.741.

(2) *Offers of proof.* Whenever evidence is excluded from the record, the party offering such evidence may make an offer of proof, which shall be included in the record. Excluded material shall be retained pursuant to § 501.739(b).

(b) *Official notice.* An Administrative Law Judge or Secretary's designee may take official notice of any material fact that might be judicially noticed by a district court of the United States, any matter in the public official records of the Secretary, or any matter that is particularly within the knowledge of the Department as an expert body. If official notice is requested or taken of a material fact not appearing in the evidence in the record, a party, upon timely request to the Administrative Law Judge, shall be afforded an opportunity to establish the contrary.