

Environmental Protection Agency

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§ 17.13 Documentation of fees and expenses.

(a) The application shall be accompanied by full documentation of fees and expenses, including the cost of any study, engineering report, test, or project, 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.

(1) The affidavit shall itemize in detail the services performed by the date, number of hours per date, and the services performed during those hours. In order to establish the hourly rate, the affidavit shall state the hourly rate which is billed and paid by the majority of clients during the relevant time periods.

(2) If no hourly rate is paid by the majority of clients because, for instance, the attorney or agent represents most clients on a contingency basis, the attorney or agent shall provide affidavits from two attorneys or agents with similar experience, who perform similar work, stating the hourly rate which they bill and are paid by the majority of their clients during a comparable time period.

(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.

(d) The Presiding Officer may require the applicant to provide vouchers, receipts, or other substantiation for any expenses claimed.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 2000-0430)

§ 17.14 Time for submission of application.

(a) An application must be filed no later than 30 days after final disposition of the proceeding. If agency review or reconsideration is sought or taken of a decision in which an applicant believes it has prevailed, action on the award of fees shall be stayed pending

final agency disposition of the underlying controversy.

(b) Final disposition means the later of:

(1) The date on which the Agency decision becomes final, either through disposition by the Environmental Appeals Board of a pending appeal or through an initial decision becoming final due to lack of an appeal or

(2) The date of final resolution of the proceeding, such as settlement or voluntary dismissal, which is not subject to a petition for rehearing or reconsideration.

(c) If judicial review is sought or taken of the final agency disposition of the underlying controversy, then agency proceedings for the award of fees will be stayed pending completion of judicial review. If, upon completion of review, the court decides what fees to award, if any, then EPA shall have no authority to award fees.

[48 FR 39936, Sept. 2, 1983, as amended at 57 FR 5323, Feb. 13, 1992]

Subpart C—Procedures for Considering Applications

§ 17.21 Filing and service of documents.

An application for an award and any other pleading or document related to the application shall be filed and served on all parties to the proceeding in the same manner as other pleadings in the proceeding.

§ 17.22 Answer to application.

(a) Within 30 calendar days after service of the application, EPA counsel shall file an answer.

(b) If EPA counsel and the applicant believe that they can reach a settlement concerning the award, EPA counsel may file a statement of intent to negotiate. The filing of such a statement shall extend the time for filing an answer an additional 30 days.

(c) The answer shall explain in detail any objections to the award requested and identify the facts relied on to support the objection. If the answer is based on any alleged facts not already reflected in the record of the proceeding, EPA counsel shall include

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with the answer either a supporting affidavit or affidavits or request for further proceedings under § 17.25.

§ 17.23 Comments by other parties.

Any party to a proceeding other than the applicant and EPA counsel may file comments on an application within 30 calendar days after it is served or on an answer within 15 calendar days after it is served.

§ 17.24 Settlement.

A prevailing party and EPA counsel may agree on a proposed settlement of an 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. If the party and EPA counsel agree on a proposed settlement of an award before an application has been filed, the application shall be filed with the proposed settlement.

§ 17.25 Extensions of time and further proceedings.

(a) The Presiding Officer may, on motion and for good cause shown, 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 of the underlying proceeding and the filings required or permitted by the foregoing sections of these rules. However, the adjudicative officer may *sua sponte* or on motion of any party to the proceedings require or permit further filings or other action, such as an informal conference, oral argument, additional written submissions, or an evidentiary hearing. Such further action shall be allowed only when necessary for full and fair resolution of the issues arising from the application and shall take place as promptly as possible. A motion for further filings or other action shall specifically identify the information sought on the disputed issues and shall explain why the further filings or other action is necessary to resolve the issues.

(c) In the event that an evidentiary hearing is required or permitted by the

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adjudicative officer, such hearing and any related filings or other action required or permitted shall be conducted pursuant to the procedural rules governing the underlying adversary adjudication.

§ 17.26 Decision on application.

The Presiding Officer shall issue a recommended decision on the application which shall include proposed 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 EPA's position as a party to the proceeding was substantially justified;

(d) Whether the 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, explaining any difference between the amount requested and the amount awarded.

§ 17.27 Agency review.

The recommended decision of the Presiding Officer will be reviewed by EPA in accordance with EPA's procedures for the type of substantive proceeding involved.

§ 17.28 Judicial review.

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

§ 17.29 Payment of award.

An applicant seeking payment of an award shall submit a copy of the final decision granting the award to the Office of Financial Management for Processing. 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 has been completed must also be included.