

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 102-354, §3(b)(3), substituted "section 573" for "section 583".

### § 578. Authority of the arbitrator

An arbitrator to whom a dispute is referred under this subchapter may—

- (1) regulate the course of and conduct arbitral hearings;
- (2) administer oaths and affirmations;
- (3) compel the attendance of witnesses and production of evidence at the hearing under the provisions of section 7 of title 9 only to the extent the agency involved is otherwise authorized by law to do so; and
- (4) make awards.

(Added Pub. L. 101-552, §4(b), Nov. 15, 1990, 104 Stat. 2742, §588; renumbered §578, Pub. L. 102-354, §3(b)(2), Aug. 26, 1992, 106 Stat. 944.)

#### Editorial Notes

##### AMENDMENTS

1992—Pub. L. 102-354 renumbered section 588 of this title as this section.

### § 579. Arbitration proceedings

(a) The arbitrator shall set a time and place for the hearing on the dispute and shall notify the parties not less than 5 days before the hearing.

(b) Any party wishing a record of the hearing shall—

- (1) be responsible for the preparation of such record;
- (2) notify the other parties and the arbitrator of the preparation of such record;
- (3) furnish copies to all identified parties and the arbitrator; and
- (4) pay all costs for such record, unless the parties agree otherwise or the arbitrator determines that the costs should be apportioned.

(c)(1) The parties to the arbitration are entitled to be heard, to present evidence material to the controversy, and to cross-examine witnesses appearing at the hearing.

(2) The arbitrator may, with the consent of the parties, conduct all or part of the hearing by telephone, television, computer, or other electronic means, if each party has an opportunity to participate.

(3) The hearing shall be conducted expeditiously and in an informal manner.

(4) The arbitrator may receive any oral or documentary evidence, except that irrelevant, immaterial, unduly repetitious, or privileged evidence may be excluded by the arbitrator.

(5) The arbitrator shall interpret and apply relevant statutory and regulatory requirements, legal precedents, and policy directives.

(d) No interested person shall make or knowingly cause to be made to the arbitrator an unauthorized ex parte communication relevant to the merits of the proceeding, unless the parties agree otherwise. If a communication is made in violation of this subsection, the arbitrator shall ensure that a memorandum of the communication is prepared and made a part of the record, and that an opportunity for rebuttal is allowed. Upon receipt of a communication made in violation of this subsection, the arbitrator may, to

the extent consistent with the interests of justice and the policies underlying this subchapter, require the offending party to show cause why the claim of such party should not be resolved against such party as a result of the improper conduct.

(e) The arbitrator shall make the award within 30 days after the close of the hearing, or the date of the filing of any briefs authorized by the arbitrator, whichever date is later, unless—

- (1) the parties agree to some other time limit; or
- (2) the agency provides by rule for some other time limit.

(Added Pub. L. 101-552, §4(b), Nov. 15, 1990, 104 Stat. 2742, §589; renumbered §579, Pub. L. 102-354, §3(b)(2), Aug. 26, 1992, 106 Stat. 944.)

#### Editorial Notes

##### AMENDMENTS

1992—Pub. L. 102-354 renumbered section 589 of this title as this section.

### § 580. Arbitration awards

(a)(1) Unless the agency provides otherwise by rule, the award in an arbitration proceeding under this subchapter shall include a brief, informal discussion of the factual and legal basis for the award, but formal findings of fact or conclusions of law shall not be required.

(2) The prevailing parties shall file the award with all relevant agencies, along with proof of service on all parties.

(b) The award in an arbitration proceeding shall become final 30 days after it is served on all parties. Any agency that is a party to the proceeding may extend this 30-day period for an additional 30-day period by serving a notice of such extension on all other parties before the end of the first 30-day period.

(c) A final award is binding on the parties to the arbitration proceeding, and may be enforced pursuant to sections 9 through 13 of title 9. No action brought to enforce such an award shall be dismissed nor shall relief therein be denied on the grounds that it is against the United States or that the United States is an indispensable party.

(d) An award entered under this subchapter in an arbitration proceeding may not serve as an estoppel in any other proceeding for any issue that was resolved in the proceeding. Such an award also may not be used as precedent or otherwise be considered in any factually unrelated proceeding, whether conducted under this subchapter, by an agency, or in a court, or in any other arbitration proceeding.

(Added Pub. L. 101-552, §4(b), Nov. 15, 1990, 104 Stat. 2743, §590; renumbered §580 and amended Pub. L. 102-354, §§3(b)(2), 5(b)(3), Aug. 26, 1992, 106 Stat. 944, 946; Pub. L. 104-320, §8(a), Oct. 19, 1996, 110 Stat. 3872.)

#### Editorial Notes

##### AMENDMENTS

1996—Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 104-320, §8(a), redesignated subsec. (d) as (c) and struck out former subsec. (c) which read as follows: "The head of any agency that is