

has been an express finding on the record, after opportunity for hearing, of a failure by the applicant or recipient to comply with a requirement imposed by or pursuant to this part, (3) the action has been approved by the Secretary pursuant to §17.9(e), and (4) the expiration of 30 days after the Secretary has filed with the committee of the House and the committee of the Senate having legislative jurisdiction over the program involved, a full written report of the circumstances and the grounds for such action. Any action to suspend or terminate or to refuse to grant or to continue Federal financial assistance shall be limited to the particular political entity, or part thereof, or other applicant or recipient as to whom such finding has been made and shall be limited in its effect to the particular program, or part thereof, in which such noncompliance has been so found.

(d) *Other means authorized by law.* No action to effect compliance by any other means authorized by law shall be taken until (1) the Secretary or his designee has determined that compliance cannot be secured by voluntary means, (2) the recipient or other person has been notified of its failure to comply and of the action to be taken to effect compliance, and (3) the expiration of at least 10 days from the mailing of such notice to the recipient or other person. During this period of at least 10 days additional effort shall be made to persuade the recipient or other person to comply with this part and to take such corrective action as may be appropriate.

[29 FR 16293, Dec. 4, 1964, as amended at 38 FR 17977, July 5, 1973]

§ 17.8 Hearings.

(a) *Opportunity for hearing.* Whenever an opportunity for a hearing is required by §17.7(c), reasonable notice shall be given by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, to the affected applicant or recipient. This notice shall advise the applicant or recipient of the action proposed to be taken, the specific provision under which the proposed action against it is to be taken, and the matters of fact or law asserted as the basis for this action, and either (1) fix a date not less

than 20 days after the date of such notice within which the applicant or recipient may request of the administrative law judge to whom the matter has been assigned that the matter be scheduled for hearing or (2) advise the applicant or recipient that the matter in question has been set down for hearing at a stated place and time. The time and place so fixed shall be reasonable and shall be subject to change for cause. The complainant, if any, shall be advised of the time and place of the hearing. An applicant or recipient may waive a hearing and submit written information and argument for the record. The failure of an applicant or recipient to request a hearing under this paragraph or to appear at a hearing for which a date has been set shall be deemed to be a waiver of the right to a hearing under section 602 of the act and §17.7(c) and consent to the making of a decision on the basis of such information as is available.

(b) *Time and place of hearing.* Hearings shall be held at the Office of Hearings and Appeals of the Department in the Washington, DC, area, at a time fixed by the administrative law judge to whom the matter has been assigned unless he determines that the convenience of the applicant or recipient or of the Department requires that another place be selected. Hearings shall be held before an administrative law judge designated by the Office of Hearings and Appeals in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 3105 and 3344.

(c) *Right to counsel.* In all proceedings under this section, the applicant or recipient and the Department shall have the right to be represented by counsel.

(d) *Procedures, evidence, and record* (1) The hearing, decision, and any administrative review thereof shall be conducted in conformity with 5 U.S.C. 554–557, and in accordance with such rules of procedure as are proper (and not inconsistent with this section) relating to the conduct of the hearing, giving of notices subsequent to those provided for in paragraph (a) of this section, taking of testimony, exhibits, arguments and briefs, requests for findings, and other related matters. Both the Department and the applicant or recipient shall be entitled to introduce all relevant evidence on the issues as

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stated in the notice for hearing or as determined by the officer conducting the hearing at the outset of or during the hearing.

(2) Technical rules of evidence shall not apply to hearings conducted pursuant to this part, but rules or principles designed to assure production of the most credible evidence available and to subject testimony to test by cross-examination shall be applied where reasonably necessary by the officer conducting the hearing. The hearing officer may exclude irrelevant, immaterial, or unduly repetitious evidence. All documents and other evidence offered or taken for the record shall be open to examination by the parties and opportunity shall be given to refute facts and arguments advanced on either side of the issues. A transcript shall be made of the oral evidence except to the extent that the substance thereof is stipulated for the record. All decisions shall be based upon the hearing record and written findings shall be made.

(e) *Consolidated or joint hearings.* In cases in which the same or related facts are asserted to constitute non-compliance with this part with respect to two or more programs to which this part applies or noncompliance with this part and the regulations of one or more other Federal departments or agencies issued under title VI of the act, the Secretary may, by agreement with such other departments or agencies, where applicable, provide for the conduct of consolidated or joint hearings, and for the application to such hearings of rules of procedure not inconsistent with this part. Final decisions in such cases, insofar as this part is concerned, shall be made in accordance with § 17.9.

[29 FR 16293, Dec. 4, 1964, as amended at 38 FR 17977, July 5, 1973]

§ 17.9 Decisions and notices.

(a) *Initial decision by an administrative law judge.* The administrative law judge shall make an initial decision and a copy of such initial decision shall be sent by registered mail, return receipt requested, to the recipient or applicant.

(b) *Review of the initial decision.* The applicant or recipient may file his exceptions to the initial decision, with

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his reasons therefor, with the Director, Office of Hearings and Appeals, within thirty days of receipt of the initial decision. In the absence of exceptions, the Director, Office of Hearings and Appeals, on his own motion within forty-five days after the initial decision, may notify the applicant or recipient that he will review the decision. In the absence of exceptions or a notice of review, the initial decision shall constitute the final decision subject to the approval of the Secretary pursuant to paragraph (f) of this section.

(c) *Decisions by the Director, Office of Hearings and Appeals.* Whenever the Director, Office of Hearings and Appeals, reviews the decision of a hearing examiner pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section, the applicant or recipient shall be given reasonable opportunity to file with him briefs or other written statements of its contention, and a copy of the final decision of the Director, Office of Hearings and Appeals, shall be given to the applicant or recipient and to the complainant, if any.

(d) *Decisions on record where a hearing is waived.* Whenever a hearing is waived pursuant to § 17.8(a), a decision shall be made by the Director, Office of Hearings and Appeals on the record and a copy of such decision shall be given in writing to the applicant or recipient and to the complainant, if any.

(e) *Rulings required.* Each decision of an administrative law judge or the Director, Office of Hearings and Appeals, shall set forth his ruling on each finding, conclusion, or exception presented, and shall identify the requirement or requirements imposed by or pursuant to this part with which it is found that the applicant or recipient has failed to comply.

(f) *Approval by Secretary.* Any final decision of a hearing examiner or of the Director, Office of Hearings and Appeals, which provides for the suspension or termination of, or the refusal to grant or continue Federal financial assistance, or the imposition of any other sanction available under this part of the act, shall promptly be transmitted to the Secretary, who may approve such decision, may vacate it, or remit or mitigate any sanction imposed.