

## 7 CFR Ch. X (1–1–97 Edition)

(4) A statement of the grounds on which the terms or provisions of the order, or the interpretation or application thereof, which are complained of, are challenged as not in accordance with law;

(5) Prayers for the specific relief which the petitioner desires the Secretary to grant;

(6) An affidavit by the petitioner, or if the petitioner is not an individual, by an officer of the petitioner having knowledge of the facts stated in the petition, verifying the petition and stating that it is filed in good faith and not for purposes of delay.

(c) *Motion to dismiss petition*—(1) *Filing, contents, and responses thereto*. If the Administrator is of the opinion that the petition, or any portion thereof, does not substantially comply, in form or content, with the act or with the requirements of paragraph (b) of this section, or is not filed in good faith, or is filed for purposes of delay, he may, within thirty days after the filing of the petition, file with the Hearing Clerk a motion to dismiss the petition, or any portion thereof, on one or more of the grounds stated in this paragraph. Such motion shall specify the grounds of objection to the petition and if based, in whole or in part, on an allegations of fact not appearing on the face of the petition, shall be accompanied by appropriate affidavits or documentary evidence substantiating such allegations of fact. The motion may be accompanied by a memorandum of law. Upon receipt of such motion, the Hearing Clerk shall cause a copy thereof to be served upon the petitioner, together with a notice stating that all papers to be submitted in opposition to such motion including any memorandum of law, must be filed by the petitioner with the Hearing Clerk not later than 20 days after the service of such notice upon the petitioner. Upon the expiration of the time specified in such notice, or upon receipt of such papers from the petitioner, the Hearing Clerk shall transmit all papers which have been filed in connection with the motion to the Judge for his consideration.

(2) *Decision by Administrative Law Judge*. The Judge, after due consideration, shall render a decision upon the motion stating the reasons for his action. Such decision shall be in the form of an order and shall be filed with the Hearing Clerk who shall cause a copy thereof to be served upon the petitioner and a copy thereof to be transmitted to the Administrator. Any such order shall be final unless appealed pursuant to §900.65: *Provided*, That within 20 days following the service upon the petitioner of a copy of the order of the Judge dismissing the petition, or any portion thereof, on the ground that it does not substantially comply in form and content with the act or with paragraph (b) of this section, the petitioner shall be permitted to file an amended petition.

(3) *Oral argument*. Unless a written application for oral argument is filed by a party with the hearing clerk not later than the time fixed for filing papers in opposition to the motion, it shall be considered that the party does not desire oral argument. The granting of a request to make oral argument shall rest in the discretion of the Judge.

[25 FR 5907, June 28, 1960, as amended at 38 FR 29798, Oct. 29, 1973]

### §900.52a Answer to petition.

(a) *Time of filing*. Within 30 days after the filing of the petition, the Administrator shall file an answer thereto: *Provided*, That if a motion to dismiss the petition, in whole or in part, is made pursuant to §900.52(c), the answer shall be filed within 15 days after the filing of an order of the administrative law judge denying the motion or granting the motion with respect to only a portion of the petition. The answer shall be filed with the hearing clerk who shall cause a copy thereof to be served promptly upon the petitioner.

(b) *Contents*. The answer shall specify which of the material allegations of fact or of law in the petition are controverted and which are not controverted. The answer also may contain affirmative allegations of fact constituting separate defenses and statements of objections to the sufficiency of the whole or any part of the petition.

[25 FR 5907, June 28, 1960]

### §900.52b Amended pleadings.

At any time before the close of the hearing the petition or answer may be amended, but the hearing shall, at the request of the adverse party, be adjourned or recessed for such reasonable time as the judge may determine to be necessary to protect the interests of the parties. Amendments subsequent to the first amendment or subsequent to the filing of an answer may be made only with leave of the judge or with the written consent of the adverse party.

### §900.53 Withdrawal of petition.

If, at any time after the petition is filed, the petitioner desires to withdraw the same, he shall file with the hearing clerk (or, if filed during the course of a hearing, with the judge) a written request for permission to withdraw. The judge may, in his discretion, thereupon dismiss the petition without further procedure: *Provided*, That, if the request to withdraw is filed after a hearing has been opened, permission to withdraw shall be granted only in exceptional circumstances.

### §900.54 Docket number.

Each proceeding, immediately following its institution, shall be assigned a docket number by the hearing clerk and thereafter