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an insured financial institution which occur after September 14, 1984.

(c) *Amendment 267*. The federally insured credit unions authorized to redeem food stamps under this amendment may begin accepting food stamps for redemption not later than March 27, 1986.

(d) The program changes of *Amendment 272* at § 278.5(a) (1) and (3) are effective upon publication of the amendment. Financial institutions must implement the provisions no later than April 21, 1986.

(e) *Amendment No. 286*. The provisions for part 278 of *Amendment No. 286* were effective March 11, 1987 for purposes of submitting applications for authorization to accept food stamps. For all other purposes, the effective date was April 1, 1987.

(f) *Amendment No. 280*. The provisions for part 271 and §§ 278.1(r) and 278.6(f) of No. 280 are effective retroactively to April 1, 1987. The provision for § 278.1(o) is effective May 22, 1987.

(g) *Amendment No. 304*. The technical amendment for part 278 of *Amendment No. 304* was effective August 1, 1988.

(h) *Amendment No. 323*. The program changes made to § 278.6 by this amendment are retroactively effective October 1, 1988.

(i) *Amendment No. 334*. The program changes made to § 278.1 and § 278.6 by this amendment are effective February 1, 1992. The program changes made to § 271.2 and § 271.5 by this amendment are retroactively effective to November 28, 1990, as specified in Pub. L. No. 101-624.

(j) *Amendment No. 354*. The program changes made to § 271.2 and § 278.6 by this amendment are effective October 1, 1993.

(k) *Amendment No. 331*. The program changes made to §§ 271.2 and 278.5 by this amendment are effective December 22, 1994.

(l) *Amendment No. 335*. Expanded authority to use and disclose information about firms participating in the FSP under CFR 278.1(r) for currently authorized firms is effective and will be implemented beginning February 25, 1997 but not before 60-days after the date of notices to such firms, notifying them of the changes. The only exception to the above is that such disclosure of information shall not apply to

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firms that are withdrawn or are disqualified from FSP participation prior to implementation, unless such firms participate in the FSP at a future date subsequent to the implementation date.

[Amdt. 136, 43 FR 43274, Sept. 22, 1978]

EDITORIAL NOTE: For FEDERAL REGISTER citations affecting § 278.9, see the List of CFR Sections Affected appearing in the Finding Aids section of this volume.

§ 278.10 [Reserved]

PART 279—ADMINISTRATIVE AND JUDICIAL REVIEW—FOOD RETAILERS AND FOOD WHOLESALERS

Subpart A—Administrative Review—General

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- 279.3 Authority and jurisdiction.
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- 279.10 Judicial review.
- 279.11 Implementation of amendments relating to administrative and judicial review.

AUTHORITY: 7 U.S.C. 2011-2032.

SOURCE: Amdt. 136, 43 FR 43279, Sept. 22, 1978, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—Administrative Review—General

§ 279.1 Scope and purpose.

Subpart A sets forth the procedure for the designation of the administrative review officers and the authority and jurisdiction of those officers. Subpart B states the rules of procedure to be followed in the filing and disposition of the requests for review provided for in § 278.8. Subpart C concerns the rights of food retailers and food wholesalers

to judicial review of the final determinations of the administrative review officer.

[Amdt. 136, 43 FR 43279, Sept. 22, 1978, as amended by Amdt. 356, 59 FR 29714, June 9, 1994]

§ 279.2 Administrative review officer.

(a) *Designation of review officers.* The Administrator, FCS, shall designate one or more persons to act as administrative review officers.

(b) *Assigning cases to review officers.* The officers shall serve for periods which the Administrator, FCS, shall determine. Changes in designations and additional designations may be made from time to time at the discretion of the Administrator, FCS. When more than one administrative review officer has been designated, requests for review will be assigned for handling to individual administrative review officers by a person designated by the Administrator, FCS. The names of the administrative review officers shall be on file in the Office of the Administrator, FCS.

[Amdt. 136, 43 FR 43279, Sept. 22, 1978, as amended by Amdt. 356, 59 FR 29714, June 9, 1994]

§ 279.3 Authority and jurisdiction.

(a) *Jurisdiction.* An administrative review officer shall act for the Department on requests for review filed by firms aggrieved by any of the following actions:

(1) Denial of an application or withdrawal of authorization to participate in the program under § 278.1;

(2) Disqualification from participation in the program or imposition of a civil money penalty under § 278.6 or imposition of a fine under § 278.6(l) or § 278.6(m);

(3) Denial of all or part of any claim asserted by a firm against FCS under § 278.7 (c), (d), or (e);

(4) Assertion of a claim under § 278.7(a); or

(5) Forfeiture of part or all of a collateral bond under § 278.1, if the request for review is made by the authorized firm. The administrative review officer shall not accept requests for review made by a bonding company or agent.

(b) *Authority.* The determination of the administrative review officer shall

be the final administrative determination of the Department, subject, however, to judicial review under section 14 of the Food Stamp Act and subpart C of this part.

[Amdt. 136, 43 FR 43279, Sept. 22, 1978, as amended by Amdt. 258, 49 FR 28393, July 12, 1984; Amdt. 257, 49 FR 32538, Aug. 15, 1984; Amdt. 262, 49 FR 50598, Dec. 31, 1984; Amdt. 334, 57 FR 3913, Feb. 3, 1992; Amdt. 356, 59 FR 29714, June 9, 1994; Amdt. 364, 61 FR 54320, Oct. 17, 1996]

§ 279.4 Rules of procedure.

Rules of procedure for the orderly filing and disposition of requests for review of firms submitted in accordance with § 279.5 are issued in subpart B of this part. The Administrator, FCS, may later issue amendments to any rules of procedure which are appropriate.

Subpart B—Rules of Procedure

§ 279.5 Manner of filing requests for review.

(a) *Addressing requests for review.* Requests for review submitted by firms shall be mailed to or filed with Director, Administrative Review Division, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Service, Room 304, 3101 Park Center Drive, Alexandria, Virginia 22302.

(b) *Content of requests.* Requests for review shall be in writing and shall state the name and business address of the firm involved, and the name, address and position with the firm of the person who signed the request. The request shall be signed by the owner of the firm, an officer or partner of the firm, or by counsel, and need not be under oath.

(c) *Time limit for requesting review.* A request for review shall be filed with the Director, Administrative Review Division, within 10 days of the date of delivery of the notice of the action for which review is requested. For purposes of determining whether a filing date is timely:

(1) The filing date shall be the postmark date of the request, or equivalent if the written request is filed by a means other than mail;

(2) In computing the 10 day period, the day of delivery of the notice of the

action for which review is requested may not be included. The last day of the period so computed shall be included, unless it is a Saturday, a Sunday, or a legal holiday. In that case, the period runs until the end of the next day which is not a Saturday, a Sunday, or a legal holiday. As used in this paragraph, “legal holiday” includes New Year’s Day, Washington’s Birthday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and any other day designated as a holiday by the President or the Congress of the United States.

[Amdt. 136, 43 FR 43279, Sept. 22, 1978, as amended by Amdt. 236, 49 FR 22058, May 25, 1984]

§ 279.6 Content of request for review.

(a) *Identifying the request.* Requests for review shall clearly identify the administrative action from which the review is requested. This identification shall include the date of the letter or other written communication notifying the firm of the administrative action, the name and title of the person who signed the letter or other communication, and whether the action under appeal concerns a denial of an application or a withdrawal of authorization to participate, a disqualification from further participation, a civil money penalty, or a denial of all or any part of a claim or a fine.

(b) *Supporting the request.* The request shall include information in support of the request showing the grounds on which review is being sought, or shall state that supporting information will be filed in writing at a later date. In the latter case, the review officer shall notify the firm of the date by which the information must be filed. The firm requesting review may ask for an opportunity to appear before the review officer in person. However, any information submitted in person shall, if directed by the review officer, be put in writing by the firm and filed with the review officer within a period which the review officer shall specify.

[Amdt. 136, 43 FR 43279, Sept. 22, 1978, as amended by Amdt. 236, 49 FR 22058, May 25, 1984; Amdt. 334, 57 FR 3913, Feb. 3, 1992]

§ 279.7 Action upon receipt of a request for review.

(a) *Holding action.* Upon receipt of a request for review of administrative action, the review officer shall notify the appropriate FCS regional office, in writing, of the action under review, and shall direct that the administrative action be held in abeyance until the review officer has made a determination. If the administrative action in question involves a denial of approval of an application to participate in the program, a denial of a claim brought by a firm against FCS, or the forfeiture of a collateral bond, the review officer shall direct that the firm not be approved for participation, not be paid any part of the disputed claim, or not be reimbursed for any bond forfeiture, until the review officer has made a determination. In any case, notice to the appropriate FCS office shall be accompanied by a copy of the request filed by the firm.

(b) *Filing supporting information.* If the request filed by the firm includes a request for an opportunity to file written information in support of its position at a later date, the administrative review officer shall promptly notify the firm of the date by which the information shall be filed. If the firm fails to file any information in support of its position by the designated date, the information submitted with the original request shall be considered to be the only information submitted by the firm. In that case, if no information in support of the firm’s position was submitted with the original request, the action of the appropriate FCS office shall be final.

(c) *Failure to meet with review officer.* If the firm filing the request for review asks to appear before the administrative review officer in person, the review officer shall promptly notify the firm of the date, time and place set for the appearance. If the firm fails to appear before the administrative review officer as specified, any written information timely submitted in accordance with this section shall be considered to be the only information submitted by the firm.

(d) *Basis for regional office determination.* The administrative review officer

shall require the appropriate FCS regional office to promptly submit, in writing, all information which was the basis for the administrative action for which the review has been requested.

[Amdt. 136, 43 FR 43279, Sept. 22, 1978, as amended by Amdt. 236, 49 FR 22059, May 25, 1984; Amdt. 258, 49 FR 28393, July 12, 1984; 49 FR 29769, July 24, 1984; Amdt. 356, 59 FR 29714, June 9, 1994]

§ 279.8 Determination of the administrative review officer.

(a) *Basis for review officer determination.* The administrative review officer shall make a determination based upon:

(1) The information submitted by the appropriate FCS office;

(2) Information submitted by the firm in support of its position; and

(3) Any additional information, in writing, obtained by the review officer from any other person having relevant information.

(b) *Review of denial of application or withdrawal of approval.* In the case of a request for review of a denial of an application or withdrawal of approval to participate in the program, the determination of the administrative review officer shall sustain the action under review or shall direct that the firm be approved for participation.

(c) *Review of disqualification or civil money penalty or fine.* In the case of a request for review of action disqualifying a firm from participation in the program or assessing a civil money penalty or fine against the firm, the determination of the administrative review officer shall sustain the action under review or specify a shorter period of disqualification or a reduced civil money penalty or fine, direct that an official warning letter be issued to the firm in lieu of any period of disqualification or civil money penalty or fine, or direct that no administrative action be taken. The administrative review officer may change a disqualification of a firm selling a substantial variety of staple foods to a civil money penalty if the review officer receives information that the disqualification would cause a hardship to participating households because there are no other firms in the area selling as large a variety of staple food items at comparable

prices, and this information was not available to the appropriate FCS office when the appropriate FCS office made its determination to disqualify the firm. In such a case, the administrative review officer, before he/she makes a determination, shall provide the information to the appropriate FCS office, which shall report to the administrative review officer whether the new information warrants a civil money penalty in lieu of disqualification. If the administrative review officer determines that a civil money penalty in lieu of a disqualification is warranted, the review officer shall determine the amount of the penalty in accordance with § 278.6.

(d) *Review of denial of claim.* In the case of a request for review of a denial of all or part of a claim of a firm, the determination of the administrative review officer shall sustain the action under review or shall specify the amount of the claim to be paid by FCS.

(e) *Notice of review officer determination.* The administrative review officer shall notify the firm of the determination by certified mail. The notification shall be sent to the representative of the firm who filed the request for review.

(f) *Notifying the appropriate FCS office.* The administrative review officer shall send a copy of the notification to the firm to the appropriate FCS office, which shall take any action which may be necessary to comply with the determination of the review officer.

(g) *Effective date.* The determination of the administrative review officer shall take effect 30 days after the date of delivery of the determination to the firm.

[Amdt. 136, 43 FR 43279, Sept. 22, 1978, as amended by Amdt. 334, 57 FR 3913, Feb. 3, 1992; Amdt. 356, 59 FR 29714, June 9, 1994]

§ 279.9 Legal advice and extensions of time.

(a) *Advice from Office of the General Counsel.* If any request for review involves any doubtful questions of law, the administrative review officer shall obtain the advice of the Department's Office of the General Counsel.

(b) *Extensions of time.* Upon timely written request to the administrative review officer by the firm requesting

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the review, the administrative review officer may grant extensions of time if, in the review officer's discretion, additional time is required for the firm to fully present information in support of its position. However, no extensions may be made in the time allowed for the filing of a request for review.

[Amdt. 136, 43 FR 43279, Sept. 22, 1978, as amended by Amdt. 356, 59 FR 29714, June 9, 1994]

Subpart C—Judicial Review

§ 279.10 Judicial review.

(a) *Filing for judicial review.* A firm aggrieved by the determination of the administrative review officer may obtain judicial review of the determination by filing a complaint against the United States in the U.S. district court for the district in which the owner resides or is engaged in business, or in any court of record of the State having competent jurisdiction. The complaint must be filed within 30 days after the date of delivery or service upon the firm of the notice of determination of the administrative review officer in accordance with § 279.8(e); otherwise the determination shall be final.

(b) *Summons and complaint.* Service of the summons and complaint in any such action shall be made in accordance with the rules of civil procedure for the U.S. district courts. The copy of the summons and complaint required by the rules to be served on the officer or agency whose order is being attacked shall be sent by registered or certified mail to the person in charge of the applicable regional office of FCS.

(c) *Trial de novo.* The suit in the U.S. district court or in the State court, as the case may be, shall be a trial de novo by the court in which the court shall determine the validity of the questioned administrative action. If the court determines that the administrative action is invalid, it shall enter a judgment or order which it determines is in accordance with the law and the evidence.

(d) *Stay of action.* During the pendency of any judicial review, or any appeal therefrom, the administrative action under review shall remain in force unless the firm makes a timely application to the court and after hearing

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thereon, the court stays the administrative action after a showing that irreparable injury will occur absent a stay and that the firm is likely to prevail on the merits of the case.

[Amdt. 136, 43 FR 43279, Sept. 22, 1978, as amended by Amdt. 274, 51 FR 18752, May 21, 1986; Amdt. 356, 59 FR 29714, June 9, 1994]

§ 279.11 Implementation of amendments relating to administrative and judicial review.

(a) *Amendment No. 257.* The program change to § 279.3(a)(4) shall be effective September 14, 1984.

(b) *Amendment No. 274.* The program change of *Amendment No. 274* at § 279.10(d) is effective retroactively to December 23, 1985.

(c) *Amendment No. 334.* The program changes made to part 279 by this amendment are effective February 1, 1992.

[Amdt. 257, 49 FR 32539, Aug. 15, 1984; Amdt. 262, 49 FR 50598, Dec. 31, 1984, as amended by Amdt. 274, 51 FR 18752, May 21, 1986; Amdt. 334, 57 FR 3913, Feb. 3, 1992]

PART 280—EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE FOR VICTIMS OF DISASTERS

AUTHORITY: 7 U.S.C. 2011–2032.

SOURCE: Amdt. 192, 46 FR 8922, Jan. 27, 1981, as amended at 56 FR 63617, Dec. 4, 1991.

EDITORIAL NOTE: OMB control numbers relating to this part 280 are contained in § 271.8.

§ 280.1 Interim disaster procedures.

The Secretary shall, after consultation with the official empowered to exercise the authority provided for by section 302(a) of the Disaster Relief Act of 1974, establish temporary emergency standards of eligibility for the duration of the emergency for households who are victims of a disaster which disrupts commercial channels of food distribution, if such households are in need of temporary food assistance and if commercial channels of food distribution have again become available to meet the temporary food needs of such households. Such standards as are prescribed for individual emergencies may be promulgated without regard to section 4(c) of this Act or the procedures set forth in section 553 of Title 5 of the