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§ 28.26 Witness fees.

The costs involved in the appearance of witnesses in any Board proceeding shall be allocated as follows:

(a) Persons employed by the GAO shall, upon request by the administrative judge to GAO, be made available to participate in the hearing and shall be in official duty status for this purpose and shall not receive witness fees. Payment of travel and per diem expenses shall be governed by applicable laws and regulations.

(b) Employees of other federal agencies called to testify at a Board hearing shall, at the request of the administrative judge and with the approval of the employing agency, be in official duty status during any period of absence from their normal duties caused by their testimony, and shall not receive witness fees. Payment of travel and per diem expenses shall be governed by applicable laws and regulations. A party planning to call an employee of another federal agency as a witness shall promptly notify the administrative judge of the need to submit to the federal agency a request that the employee be granted official duty status. In the event that the employing agency refuses the request to release the employee-witness in an official duty status, the employee-witness may be paid a witness fee in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section.

(c) Witnesses who are not covered by paragraphs (a) or (b) of this section are entitled to the same witness fees as those paid to subpoenaed witnesses under 28 U.S.C. 1821. The fees shall be paid, in the first instance, by the party requesting the appearance of the witness, subject to a subsequent decision otherwise in accordance with § 28.89, concerning the award of attorneys fees and costs. Such fees shall be tendered to the witness at the time the subpoena is served, or, when the witness appears voluntarily, at the time of appearance. A federal agency or corporation is not required to tender witness fees in advance. Payment of travel and per diem expenses shall be governed by applicable law and regulation.

(d) When the General Counsel is the petitioner or is representing the petitioner, the General Counsel shall pay the witness fees and arrange for the

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travel and per diem expenses that are required by paragraph (c) of this section.

§ 28.27 Intervenors.

(a) Intervenors are persons who are allowed to participate in a proceeding because the proceeding, or its outcome, may affect their rights or duties.

(b) Any person may, by motion to the administrative judge, request permission to intervene. The motion shall state the reasons why the person should be permitted to intervene. A person alleged to have committed a prohibited personnel practice under 5 U.S.C. 2302(b) may request permission to intervene under this section.

(c) A motion for permission to intervene will be granted where a determination is made by the administrative judge or the Board that the requester will be affected directly by the outcome of the proceeding. Denial of a motion for intervention may be appealed to the Board. Such an appeal shall be filed within 10 days of service of the denial of the motion to intervene.

(d) Intervenors who are granted permission to intervene will be considered full parties to the hearing and will have the same rights and duties as a party with two exceptions:

(1) Intervenors will not have an independent right to a hearing.

(2) Intervenors may participate in Board proceedings only on the issues affecting them, as determined by the administrative judge or Board.

§ 28.28 Substitution.

(a) If a petitioner dies or is otherwise unable to pursue the appeal, the action may be completed upon substitution of a proper party.

(b) A motion for substitution shall be filed by the proper party within 90 days after the death of the petitioner or other disabling event.

§ 28.29 Consolidation or joinder.

(a) *Explanation.* (1) Consolidation may occur where two or more parties have cases which should be united because they contain identical or similar issues or in such other circumstances as justice requires.

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(2) Joinder may occur where one person has two or more appeals pending and they are united for consideration. For example, a single appellant who has one appeal pending challenging a 30-day suspension and another appeal pending challenging a subsequent dismissal might have the cases joined.

(b) *Action by administrative judge.* An administrative judge may consolidate or join cases on his or her own initiative or on the motion of a party if to do so would expedite processing of the cases and not adversely affect the interests of the parties.

DISCOVERY

§ 28.40 Statement of purpose.

Proceedings before the Board shall be conducted as expeditiously as possible with due regard to the rights of the parties. Discovery is designed to enable a party to obtain relevant information needed for presentation of the party's case. These regulations are intended to provide a simple method of discovery. They will be interpreted and applied so as to avoid delay and to facilitate adjudication of the case. The parties are expected to initiate and complete needed discovery with a minimum of Board intervention.

§ 28.41 Explanation, scope and methods.

(a) *Explanation.* Discovery is the process apart from the hearing whereby a party may obtain relevant information from another person, including a party, which has not otherwise been provided. Relevant information includes information which appears reasonably calculated to lead to the discovery of admissible evidence. This information is obtained for the purpose of assisting the parties in developing, preparing, and presenting their cases. The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure may be used as a general guide for discovery practices in proceedings before the Board, except as to matters specifically covered by these regulations. The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure shall be interpreted as instructive rather than controlling.

(b) *Scope.* Any person may be examined pursuant to paragraph (c) of this section regarding any nonprivileged

matter which is relevant to the issue under appeal, including the existence, description, nature, custody, condition and location of documents or other tangible things, and the identity and location of persons having knowledge of relevant facts. The information sought must appear reasonably calculated to lead to the discovery of admissible evidence.

(c) *Methods.* Discovery may be obtained by one or more of the methods provided under the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, including written interrogatories, depositions, production of documents or things for inspection or copying, and requests for admission addressed to parties.

§ 28.42 Discovery procedures and protective orders.

(a) *Discovery from a party.* A party seeking discovery from another party shall initiate the process by serving a request for discovery on the other party. For purposes of discovery under these regulations, a party includes an intervenor.

(1) Each request for discovery shall state the time limit for responding, as prescribed in paragraph (d) of this section.

(2) In the case of a request for deposition of a party, reasonable notice in writing shall be given to every party to the action. The notice shall:

(i) Specify the time and place of the taking of the deposition; and

(ii) Be served on the person to be deposed.

(3) When a request for discovery is directed to an officer or employee of GAO, the agency shall make the officer or employee available on official time for the purpose of responding to the request and shall assist the officer or employee as necessary in providing relevant information that is available to the agency.

(b) *Discovery from a nonparty.* Parties are encouraged to attempt to obtain voluntary discovery from nonparties whenever possible. A party seeking discovery from a nonparty may initiate the process by serving a request for discovery on that nonparty and on all other parties to the proceeding. When a party is unable to obtain voluntary cooperation, the party may request that