

SUBCHAPTER N—MISCELLANEOUS

PART 131—CERTIFICATES OF AUTHENTICATION

Sec.

131.1 Certification of documents.

131.2 Refusal of certification for unlawful purpose.

§ 131.1 Certification of documents.

The Authentication Officer, Acting Authentication Officer, or any Assistant Authentication Officer designated by either of the former officers may, and is hereby authorized to, sign and issue certificates of authentication under the seal of the Department of State for and in the name of the Secretary of State or the Acting Secretary of State. The form of authentication shall be as follows:

In testimony whereof, I, _____, Secretary of State have hereunto caused the seal of the Department of State to be affixed and my name subscribed by the Authentication Officer, Acting Authentication Officer, or an Assistant Authentication Officer, of the said Department, at _____ in _____, this _____ day of _____ 19 _____

(Secretary of State)

By _____
(_____ Authentication Officer, Department of State)

(22 U.S.C. 2651a)

[61 FR 39585, July 30, 1996]

§ 131.2 Refusal of certification for unlawful purpose.

(a) The Department will not certify to a document when it has good reason to believe that the certification is desired for an unlawful or improper purpose. It is therefore the duty of the Authentication Officer to examine not only the document which the Department is asked to authenticate, but also the fundamental document to which previous seals or other certifications may have been affixed by other authorities. The Authentication Officer shall request such additional information as may be necessary to establish that the requested authentication will

serve the interests of justice and is not contrary to public policy.

(b) In accordance with section 3, paragraph 5 of the Export Administration Act of 1969 (83 Stat. 841, Pub. L. 91-184) approved December 30, 1969, documents which have the effect of furthering or supporting the restrictive trade practices or boycotts fostered or imposed by foreign countries against countries friendly to the United States shall be considered contrary to public policy for purposes of these regulations.

(R.S. 203, sec. 4, 63 Stat. 111, as amended, sec. 1733, 62 Stat. 946, secs. 104, 332, 66 Stat. 174, 252; 22 U.S.C. 2657, 2658, 28 U.S.C. 1733, 8 U.S.C. 1104, 1443)

[22 FR 10882, Dec. 27, 1957, as amended at 30 FR 12732, Oct. 6, 1965; Dept. Reg. 108.621, 35 FR 8887, June 9, 1970]

PART 132—BOOKS, MAPS, NEWSPAPERS, ETC.

§ 132.1 Purchase.

The purchase by the Department of State of books, maps, newspapers, periodicals, and other publications shall be made without regard to the provisions of the act approved March 3, 1933 (sec. 2, 47 Stat. 1520; 41 U.S.C. 10a), since determination has been made by the Secretary, as permitted by the provisions of the act, that such purchase is inconsistent with the public interest.

(80 Stat. 379; 5 U.S.C. 301)

[22 FR 10883, Dec. 27, 1957]

PART 134—EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE ACT; IMPLEMENTATION

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AUTHORITY: Sec. 203(a)(1), Pub. L. 96-481, 94 Stat. 2325 (5 U.S.C. 504(c)(1)).

SOURCE: 46 FR 58301, Dec. 1, 1981, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—General Provisions

§ 134.1 Purpose of these rules.

The Equal Access to Justice Act, 5 U.S.C. 504 (called “the Act” in this part), provides for the award of attorney fees and other expenses to eligible individuals and entities who are parties to certain administrative proceedings (called “adversary adjudications”) before the Department of State. An eligible party may receive an award when it prevails over the Department of State, unless the Department of State’s position in the proceeding was substantially justified or special circumstances make an award unjust. The rules in this part describe the parties eligible for awards and the proceedings that are covered. They also explain how to apply for awards, and the procedures and standards that the Department will observe to make them.

§ 134.2 When the Act applies.

The Act applies to any adversary adjudication pending before the Department of State at any time between October 1, 1981 and September 30, 1984. This includes proceedings begun before October 1, 1981 if final agency action has not been taken before that date, and proceedings pending on September 30, 1984, regardless of when they were

initiated or when final agency action occurs.

§ 134.3 Proceedings covered.

(a) The Act applies to adversary adjudications conducted by the Department of State. These are adjudications under 5 U.S.C. 554 in which the position of the Department of State is presented by an attorney or other representative who enters an appearance and participates in the proceeding. For the Department of State, the type of proceeding covered are proceedings relative to controlling export of defense articles through administrative sanctions pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2778 and 50 U.S.C. App. 2410 (c)(2)(B).

(b) The Department of State may also designate a proceeding not listed in paragraph (a) of this section as an adversary adjudication for purposes of the Act by so stating in an order initiating the proceeding or designating the matter for hearing. The failure to designate a proceeding as an adversary adjudication shall not preclude the filing of an application by a party who believes the proceeding is covered by the Act; whether the proceeding is covered will then be an issue for resolution in proceedings on the application.

(c) If a proceeding includes matters covered by the Act and matters specifically excluded from coverage, any award made will include only fees and expenses related to covered issues.

§ 134.4 Eligibility of applicants.

(a) To be eligible for an award of attorney fees and other expenses under the Act, the applicant must be a party to the adversary adjudication for which it seeks an award. The term “party” is defined in 5 U.S.C. 551(3). The applicant must show by clear and convincing evidence that it meets all conditions of eligibility set out in this subpart and in subpart B and must submit additional information to verify its eligibility upon order by the adjudicative officer.

(b) The types of eligible applicants are as follows:

- (1) An individual with a net worth of not more than \$1 million;
- (2) The sole owner of an unincorporated business who has a net worth of not more than \$5 million, including

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both personal and business interests, and not more than 500 employees;

(3) A charitable or other tax-exempt organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3)) with not more than 500 employees;

(4) A cooperative association as defined in section 15(a) of the Agricultural Marketing Act (12 U.S.C. 1141j(a)) with not more than 500 employees; and

(5) Any other partnership, corporation, association, or public or private organization with a net worth of not more than \$5 million and not more than 500 employees.

(c) For the purpose of eligibility, the net worth and number of employees of an applicant shall be determined as of the date the proceeding was initiated.

(d) An applicant who owns an unincorporated business will be considered as an “individual” rather than a “sole owner of an unincorporated business” if the issues on which the applicant prevails are related primarily to personal interests rather than to business interests.

(e) The employees of an applicant include all persons who regularly perform services for remuneration for the applicant, under the applicant’s direction and control. Part-time employees shall be included on a proportional basis.

(f) The net worth and number of employees of the applicant and all of its affiliates shall be aggregated to determine eligibility. Any individual, corporation or other entity that directly or indirectly controls or owns a majority of the voting shares or other interest of the applicant, or any corporation or other entity of which the applicant directly or indirectly owns or controls a majority of the voting shares or other interest, will be considered an affiliate for purposes of this part, unless the adjudicative officer determines that such treatment would be unjust and contrary to the purposes of the Act in light of the actual relationship between the affiliated entities. In addition, the adjudicative officer may determine that financial relationships of the applicant other than those described in this paragraph constitute special circumstances that would make an award unjust.

(g) An applicant that participates in a proceeding primarily on behalf of one or more other persons or entities that would be ineligible is not itself eligible for an award.

§ 134.5 Standard for awards.

(a) A prevailing applicant may receive an award for fees and expenses incurred in connection with a proceeding, or in a significant and discrete substantive portion of the proceeding, unless the position of the agency over which the applicant has prevailed is substantially justified. The burden of proof that an award should not be made to an eligible prevailing applicant is on the Department of State which may avoid an award by showing that its position was reasonable in law and fact.

(b) An award will be reduced or denied if the applicant has unduly or unreasonably protracted the proceeding or if special circumstances make the award sought unjust.

§ 134.6 Allowable fees and expenses.

(a) Awards will be based on rates customarily charged by persons engaged in the business of acting as attorneys, agents and expert witnesses, even if the services were made available without charge or at a reduced rate to the applicant.

(b) No award for the fee of an attorney or agent under these rules may exceed \$75.00 per hour. No award to compensate an expert witness may exceed the highest rate at which the Department of State pays expert witnesses, which is generally \$50.00 per hour. However, an award may also include the reasonable expenses of the attorney, agent or witness as a separate item, if the attorney, agent or witness ordinarily charges clients separately for such expenses.

(c) In determining the reasonableness of the fee sought for an attorney, agent or expert witness, the adjudicative officer shall consider the following:

(1) If the attorney, agent or witness is in private practice, his or her customary fee for similar services, or, if an employee of the applicant, the fully allocated cost of the services;

(2) The prevailing rate for similar services in the community in which the

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attorney, agent or witness ordinarily performs services;

(3) The time actually spent in the representation of the applicant;

(4) the time reasonably spent in light of the difficulty or complexity of the issues in the proceeding; and

(5) Such other factors as may bear on the value of the services provided.

(d) The reasonable cost of any study, analysis, engineering report, test, project or similar matter prepared on behalf of a party may be awarded, to the extent that the charge for the service does not exceed the prevailing rate for similar services, and the study or other matter was necessary for preparation of applicant's case.

§ 134.7 Rulemaking on maximum rates for attorney fees.

(a) If warranted by an increase in the cost of living or by special circumstances (such as limited availability of attorneys qualified to handle certain types of proceedings), the Department of State may adopt regulations providing that attorney fees may be awarded at a rate higher than \$75 per hour in some or all of the types of proceedings covered by this part. The Department of State will conduct any rulemaking proceedings for this purpose under the informal rulemaking procedures of the Administrative Procedure Act.

(b) Any person may request the Department of State to initiate a rulemaking proceeding to increase the maximum rate for attorney fees. The request should identify the rate the person believes the Department of State should establish and the types of proceedings in which the rate should be used. It should also explain fully the reasons why the higher rate is warranted. The Department of State will respond to the request within 60 days after it is filed, by determining to initiate a rulemaking proceeding, denying the request, or taking other appropriate action.

§ 134.8 Official authorized to take final action under the Act.

The Department of State official who renders the final agency decision in a covered proceeding is authorized to take final action on matters pertaining

to the Equal Access to Justice Act as applied to the proceeding.

Subpart B—Information Required From Applicants

§ 134.11 Contents of application.

(a) An application for an award of fees and expenses under the Act shall identify the applicant and the proceeding for which an award is sought. The application shall show that the applicant has prevailed and identify the position of the Department of State in the proceeding that the applicant alleges was not substantially justified. Unless the applicant is an individual, the application shall also state the number of employees of the applicant and describe briefly the type and purpose of its organization or business.

(b) The application shall also include a statement that the applicant's net worth does not exceed \$1 million (if an individual) or \$5 million (for all other applicants, including their affiliates). However, an applicant may omit this statement if:

(1) It attaches a copy of a ruling by the Internal Revenue Service that it qualifies as an organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3)) or, in the case of a tax-exempt organization not required to obtain a ruling from the Internal Revenue Service on its exempt status, a statement that describes the basis for the applicant's belief that it qualifies under such section; or

(2) It states on the application that it is a cooperative association as defined in section 15(a) of the Agricultural Marketing Act (12 U.S.C. 1141j(a)).

(c) The application shall state the amount of fees and expenses for which an award is sought.

(d) The application may also include any other matters that the applicant wishes the Department of State to consider in determining whether and in what amount an award should be made.

(e) The application shall be signed by the applicant or an authorized officer or attorney of the applicant. It shall also contain or be accompanied by a written verification under oath or under penalty of perjury that the information provided in the application is true and correct.

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§ 134.12 Net worth exhibit.

(a) Each applicant except a qualified tax-exempt organization or cooperative association must provide with its application a detailed exhibit showing the net worth of the applicant and any affiliates (as defined in §960.4(f)) when the proceeding was initiated. The exhibit may be in any form convenient to the applicant that provides full disclosure of the applicant's and its affiliates' assets and liabilities and is sufficient to determine whether the applicant qualifies under the standards in his part. The adjudicative officer may require an applicant to file additional information to determine its eligibility for an award.

(b) Ordinarily, the net worth exhibit will be included in the public record of the proceeding. However, an applicant that objects to public disclosure of information in any portion of the exhibit and believes there are legal grounds for withholding it from disclosure may submit that portion of the exhibit directly to the adjudicative officer in a sealed envelope labeled "Confidential Financial Information", accompanied by a motion to withhold the information from public disclosure. The motion shall describe the information sought to be withheld and explain, in detail, why it falls within one or more of the specific exemptions from mandatory disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 551(b) (1)–(9), why public disclosure of the information would adversely affect the applicant, and why disclosure is not required in the public interest. The material in question shall be served on counsel representing the agency against which the applicant seeks an award, but need not be served on any other party to the proceeding. If the adjudicative officer finds that the information should not be withheld from disclosure, it shall be placed in the public record of the proceeding. Otherwise, any request to inspect or copy the exhibit shall be disposed of in accordance with the Department of State established procedures under the Freedom of Information Act, part 6 of this title.

§ 134.13 Documentation of fees and expenses.

The application shall be accompanied by full documentation of the fees and expenses, including the cost of any study, analysis, engineering report, test project or similar matter, for which an award is sought. A separate itemized statement shall be submitted for each professional firm or individual whose services are covered by the application, showing the hours spent in connection with the proceeding by each individual, a description of the specific services performed, the rate at which each fee has been computed, any expenses for which reimbursement is sought, the total amount claimed, and the total amount paid or payable by the applicant or by any other person or entity for the services provided. The adjudicative officer may require the applicant to provide vouchers, receipts, or other substantiation for any expenses claimed.

§ 134.14 When application may be filed.

(a) An application may be filed whenever the applicant has prevailed in the proceeding or in a significant and discrete substantive portion of the proceeding, but in no case later than 30 days after the Department of State's final disposition of the proceeding.

(b) If review or reconsideration is sought or taken of a decision as to which an applicant believes it has prevailed, proceedings for the award of fees shall be stayed pending final disposition of the underlying controversy.

(c) For purposes of this rule, final disposition means the later of (1) the date on which an initial decision or other recommended disposition of the merits of the proceeding by an adjudicative officer or intermediate review board becomes administratively final; (2) issuance of an order disposing of any petitions for reconsideration of the Department of State's final order in the proceeding; (3) if no petition for reconsideration is filed, the last date on which such a petition could have been filed; or (4) issuance of a final order or any other final resolution of a proceeding, such as a settlement or voluntary dismissal, which is not subject to a petition for reconsideration or to a

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petition for judicial review; or (5) completion of judicial action on the underlying controversy and any subsequent Department of State action pursuant to judicial mandate.

Subpart C—Procedures for Considering Applications

§ 134.21 Filing and service of documents.

Any application for an award or other pleading or document related to an application shall be filed and served on all parties to the proceeding in the same manner as other pleadings in the proceeding, except as provided in § 134.12(b) for confidential financial information.

§ 134.22 Answer to application.

(a) Within 30 days after service of an application, counsel representing the Department of State may file an answer to the application. Unless the Department of State counsel requests an extension of time for filing or files a statement of intent to negotiate under paragraph (b) of this section, failure to file an answer within the 30 day period may be treated as a consent to the award requested.

(b) If the Department of State counsel and the applicant believe that the issues in the fee application can be settled, they may jointly file a statement of their intent to negotiate a settlement. The filing of this statement shall extend the time for filing an answer for an additional 30 days, and further extensions may be granted by the adjudicative officer upon request by Department of State counsel and the applicant.

(c) The answer shall explain in detail any objections to the award requested and identify the facts relied on in support of the Department of State position. If the answer is based on any alleged facts not already in the record of the proceeding the Department of State shall include with the answer either supporting affidavits or a request for further proceedings under § 134.26.

§ 134.23 Reply.

Within 15 days after service of an answer, the applicant may file a reply. If the reply is based on any alleged facts

not already in the record of the proceeding, the applicant shall include with the reply either supporting affidavits or a request for further proceedings under § 134.26.

§ 134.24 Comments by other parties.

Any party to a proceeding other than the applicant and Department of State may file comments on an application within 30 days after it is served or on an answer within 15 days after it is served. A commenting party may not participate further in proceedings on the application unless the adjudicative officer determines that the public interest requires such participation in order to permit full exploration of matters raised in the comment.

§ 134.25 Settlement.

The applicant and the Department of State may agree on a proposed settlement of the award before final action on the application, either in connection with a settlement of the underlying proceeding, or after the underlying proceeding has been concluded. If a prevailing party and Department of State counsel agree on a proposed settlement of an award before an application has been filed, the application shall be filed with the proposed settlement.

§ 134.26 Further proceedings.

(a) Ordinarily, the determination of an award will be made on the basis of the written record. However, on request of either the applicant or Department of State counsel, or on his or her own initiative, the adjudicative officer may order further proceedings, such as an informal conference, oral argument, additional written submissions, or an evidentiary hearing. Such further proceedings shall be held only when necessary for full and fair resolution of the issues arising from the application, and shall be conducted as promptly as possible.

(b) A request that the adjudicative officer order further proceedings under this section shall specifically identify the information sought or the disputed issues and shall explain why the additional proceedings are necessary to resolve the issues.

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§ 134.27 Decision.

The adjudicative officer shall issue an initial decision on the application as promptly as possible after completion of proceedings on the application. The decision shall include written findings and conclusions on the applicant's eligibility and status as a prevailing party, and an explanation of the reasons for any difference between the amount requested and the amount awarded. The decision shall also include, if at issue, findings on whether the Department of State position was substantially justified, whether the applicant unduly protracted the proceedings, or whether special circumstances make an award unjust. If the applicant has sought an award against the Department of State and another agency, the decision shall allocate responsibility for payment of any award made between the Department of State and the other agency, and shall explain the reasons for the allocation made.

§ 134.28 Further Department of State review.

Either the applicant or Department of State counsel may seek review of the initial decision. If neither the applicant nor the Department of State counsel seeks review, the initial decision shall become a final decision of the Department of State 30 days after it is issued. If review is taken the Judicial Officer will issue a final decision on the application or remand the application to the adjudicative officer for further proceedings.

§ 134.29 Judicial review.

Judicial review of final Department of State decisions on awards as may be sought as provided in 5 U.S.C. 504(c)(2).

§ 134.30 Payment of award.

An applicant seeking payment of an award shall submit to the Comptroller or other disbursing official of the Department of State a copy of the final decision granting the award accompanied by a statement that the applicant will not seek review of the decision in the United States courts. Requests for payment should be sent to: Executive Director, Office of the Comptroller, Room 1328, Department of

State, 2201 C Street, NW., Washington, DC 20520. The Department of State will pay the amount awarded to the applicant within 60 days, unless judicial review of the award or of the underlying decision of the adversary adjudication has been sought by the applicant or any other party to the proceeding.

PART 135—UNIFORM ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS TO STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

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