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The rules of evidence shall not be followed. Witnesses shall testify under oath or affirmation. A recording or transcript of every oral hearing shall be made. The hearing official may exclude irrelevant, immaterial, or unduly repetitious testimony.

(b) Upon the receipt of a community residential care facility's request for a paper hearing, the hearing official shall notify the community residential care facility operator that written statements and other evidence must be submitted to the hearing official by a specified date in order to be considered as part of the record.

(c) In all hearings, the community residential care facility operator and VA may be represented by counsel.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1730)

[54 FR 20842, May 15, 1989. Redesignated at 61 FR 21965, May 13, 1996]

§ 17.69 Waiver of opportunity for hearing.

If representatives of a community residential care facility which receive a notice of noncompliance under § 17.66 of this part fail to appear at an oral hearing of which they have been notified or fail to submit written statements for a paper hearing in accordance with § 17.68 of this part, unless the hearing official determines that their failure was due to circumstances beyond their control, the hearing official shall:

(a) Consider the representatives of the community residential care facility to have waived their opportunity for a hearing; and,

(b) Revoke VA approval of the community residential care facility and notify the community residential care facility of this revocation.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1730)

[54 FR 20842, May 15, 1989. Redesignated and amended at 61 FR 21965, 21967, May 13, 1996]

§ 17.70 Written decision following a hearing.

(a) The hearing official shall issue a written decision within 20 days of the completion of the hearing. An oral hearing shall be considered completed when the hearing ceases to receive in person testimony. A paper hearing shall be considered complete on the

date by which written statements must be submitted to the hearing official in order to be considered as part of the record.

(b) The hearing official's determination of a community residential care facility's noncompliance with VA standards shall be based on the preponderance of the evidence.

(c) The written decision shall include:

(1) A statement of the facts;

(2) A determination whether the community residential care facility complies with the standards set forth in § 17.63 of this part; and

(3) A determination of the time period, if any, the community residential care facility shall have to remedy any noncompliance with VA standards before revocation of VA approval occurs.

(d) The hearing official's determination of any time period under paragraph (c)(3) of this section shall consider the safety and health of the residents of the community residential care facility and the length of time since the community residential care facility received notice of the noncompliance.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1730)

[54 FR 20842, May 15, 1989. Redesignated and amended at 61 FR 21965, 21967, May 13, 1996]

§ 17.71 Revocation of VA approval.

(a) If a hearing official determines under § 17.70 of this part that a community residential care facility does not comply with the standards set forth in § 17.63 of this part and determines that the community residential care facility shall not have further time to remedy the noncompliance, the hearing official shall revoke approval of the community residential care facility and notify the community residential care facility of this revocation.

(b) Upon revocation of VA approval, VA health care personnel shall:

(1) Cease referring veterans to the community residential care facility; and,

(2) Notify any veteran residing in the community residential care facility of the facility's disapproval and request permission to assist in the veteran's removal from the facility. If a veteran has a person or entity authorized by law to give permission on behalf of the

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veteran, VA health care personnel shall notify that person or entity of the community residential care facility's disapproval and request permission to assist in removing the veteran from the community residential care facility.

(c) If the hearing official determines that a community residential care facility fails to comply with the standards set forth in §17.63 of this part and determines that the community residential care facility shall have an additional time period to remedy the non-compliance, the hearing official shall review at the end of the time period the evidence of the community residential care facility's compliance with the standards which were to have been met by the end of that time period and determine if the community residential care facility complies with the standards. If the community residential care facility fails to comply with these or any other standards, the procedures set forth in §§17.66-17.71 of this part shall be followed.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1730)

[54 FR 20842, May 15, 1989. Redesignated and amended at 61 FR 21965, 21967, May 13, 1996]

§ 17.72 Availability of information.

VA standards will be made available to other Federal, State and local agencies charged with the responsibility of licensing, or otherwise regulating or inspecting community residential care facilities.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1730)

[54 FR 20842, May 15, 1989. Redesignated at 61 FR 21965, May 13, 1996]

USE OF SERVICES OF OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES

§ 17.80 Alcohol and drug dependence or abuse treatment and rehabilitation in residential and nonresidential facilities by contract.

(a) Alcohol and drug dependence or abuse treatment and rehabilitation may be authorized by contract in non-residential facilities and in residential facilities provided by halfway houses, therapeutic communities, psychiatric residential treatment centers and other community-based treatment facilities, when considered to be medi-

cally advantageous and cost effective for the following:

(1) Veterans who have been or are being furnished care by professional staff over which the Secretary has jurisdiction and such transitional care is reasonably necessary to continue treatment;

(2) Persons in the Armed Forces who, upon discharge therefrom will become eligible veterans, when duly referred with authorization for Department of Veterans Affairs medical center hospital care in preparation for treatment and rehabilitation in this program under the following limitations:

(i) Such persons may be accepted by transfer only during the last 30 days of such person's enlistment or tour of duty,

(ii) The person requests transfer in writing for treatment for a specified period of time during the last 30 days of such person's enlistment period or tour of duty,

(iii) Treatment does not extend beyond the period of time specified in the request unless such person requests in writing an extension for a further specified period of time and such request is approved by the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center Director authorizing treatment and rehabilitation,

(iv) Such care and treatment will be provided as if the person were a veteran, subject to reimbursement by the respective military service for the costs of hospital care and control treatment provided while the person is an active duty member.

(b) The maximum period for one treatment episode is limited to 60 days. The Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center Director may authorize one 30-day extension.

(c) Any person who has been discharged or released from active military, naval or air service, and who, upon application for treatment and rehabilitative services under the authority of this section is determined to be legally ineligible for such treatment or rehabilitation services shall be:

(1) Provided referral services to assist the person, to the maximum extent possible, in obtaining treatment and rehabilitation services from sources