

§ 16.8

Board's acknowledgment to the respondent. If the Board Chair has determined that the appeal does not meet the conditions of §16.3 or if further information is needed to make this determination, the Board will notify the parties at this point.

§ 16.8 The next step in the appeal process: Preparation of an appeal file and written argument.

Except in expedited cases (generally those of \$25,000 or less; see §16.12 for details), the appellant and the respondent each participate in developing an appeal file for the Board to review. Each also submits written argument in support of its position. The responsibilities of each are as follows:

(a) *The appellant's responsibility.* Within 30 days after receiving the acknowledgment of the appeal, the appellant shall submit the following to the Board (with a copy to the respondent):

(1) An appeal file containing the documents supporting the claim, tabbed and organized chronologically and accompanied by an indexed list identifying each document. The appellant should include only those documents which are important to the Board's decision on the issues in the case.

(2) A written statement of the appellant's argument concerning why the respondent's final decision is wrong (appellant's brief).

(b) *The respondent's responsibility.* Within 30 days after receiving the appellant's submission under paragraph (a) of this section, the respondent shall submit the following to the Board (with a copy to the appellant):

(1) A supplement to the appeal file containing any additional documents supporting the respondent's position, organized and indexed as indicated under paragraph (a) of this section. The respondent should avoid submitting duplicates of documents submitted by the appellant.

(2) A written statement (respondent's brief) responding to the appellant's brief.

(c) *The appellant's reply.* Within 15 days after receiving the respondent's submission, the appellant may submit a short reply. The appellant should avoid repeating arguments already made.

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(d) *Cooperative efforts.* Whenever possible, the parties should try to develop a joint appeal file, agree to preparation of the file by one of them, agree to facts to eliminate the need for some documents, or agree that one party will submit documents identified by the other.

(e) *Voluminous documentation.* Where submission of all relevant documents would lead to a voluminous appeal file (for example where review of a disputed audit finding of inadequate documentation might involve thousands of receipts), the Board will consult with the parties about how to reduce the size of the file.

§ 16.9 How the Board will promote development of the record.

The Board may, at the time it acknowledges an appeal or at any appropriate later point, request additional documents or information; request briefing on issues in the case; issue orders to show cause why a proposed finding or decision of the Board should not become final; hold preliminary conferences (generally by telephone) to establish schedules and refine issues; and take such other steps as the Board determines appropriate to develop a prompt, sound decision.

§ 16.10 Using a conference.

(a) Once the Board has reviewed the appeal file, the Board may, on its own or in response to a party's request, schedule an informal conference. The conference will be conducted by the presiding Board member. The purposes of the conference are to give the parties an opportunity to make an oral presentation and the Board an opportunity to clarify issues and question both parties about matters which the Board may not yet fully understand from the record.

(b) If the Board has decided to hold a conference, the Board will consult or correspond with the parties to schedule the conference, identify issues, and discuss procedures. The Board will identify the persons who will be allowed to participate, along with the parties' representatives, in the conference. The parties can submit with their briefs under §16.8 a list of persons who might participate with them, indicating how