

§ 658.417 Hearings.

(a) Hearings shall be held by State hearing officials. A State hearing official may be any State official authorized to hold hearings under State law. They may be, for example, the same referees who hold hearings under the State unemployment compensation law or any official of the State agency, authorized by State law to preside at State administrative hearings.

(b) The State hearing official may decide to conduct hearings on more than one complaint concurrently if he/she determines that the issues are related or that the complaints will be handled more expeditiously in this fashion.

(c) The State hearing official, upon the referral of a case for a hearing, shall:

(1) Notify all involved parties of the date, time and place of the hearing; and

(2) Re-schedule the hearing, as appropriate.

(d) In conducting a hearing the State hearing official shall:

(1) Regulate the course of the hearing;

(2) Issue subpoenas, if empowered to do so under State law, if necessary;

(3) Assure that all relevant issues are considered;

(4) Rule on the introduction of evidence and testimony; and

(5) Take any other action which is necessary to insure an orderly hearing.

(e) The testimony at the hearing shall be recorded and may be transcribed when appropriate.

(f) The parties shall be afforded the opportunity to present, examine, and cross-examine witnesses.

(g) The State hearing official may elicit testimony from witnesses, but shall not act as advocate for any party.

(h) The State hearing official shall receive and include in the record, documentary evidence offered by any party and accepted at the hearing. Copies thereof shall be made available by the party submitting the document to other parties to the hearing upon request.

(i) Technical rules of evidence shall not apply to hearings conducted pursuant to this section, but rules or principles designed to assure production of the most credible evidence available

and to subject testimony to test by cross-examination, shall be applied where reasonably necessary by the State hearing official. The State hearing official may exclude irrelevant, immaterial, or unduly repetitious evidence.

(j) The case record, or any portion thereof, shall be available for inspection and copying by any party at, prior to, or subsequent to the hearing upon request. Special procedures may be used for disclosure of medical and psychological records such as disclosure to a physician designated by the individual.

(k) The State hearing official shall, if feasible, resolve the dispute by conciliation at any time prior to the conclusion of the hearing.

(l) At the State hearing official's discretion, other appropriate individuals, organizations, or associations may be permitted to participate in the hearing as *amicus curiae* (friends of the court) with respect to specific legal or factual issues relevant to the complaint. Any documents submitted by the *amicus curiae* shall be included in the record.

(m) The following standards shall apply to the location of hearings involving parties in more than one State or in locations within a State but which are separated geographically so that access to the hearing location is extremely inconvenient for one or more parties as determined by the State hearing official.

(1) Whenever possible, the State hearing official shall hold a single hearing, at a location convenient to all parties or their representatives wishing to appear and present evidence, and with all such parties and/or their representatives present.

(2) If a hearing location cannot be established by the State hearing official pursuant to paragraph (m)(1) of this section, the State hearing official may conduct, with the consent of the parties, the hearing by a telephone conference call from a State agency office with all parties and their representatives not choosing to be present at that location permitted to participate in the hearing from their distant locations.

(3) Where the State agency does not have the facilities to conduct hearings

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by telephone pursuant to paragraph (m)(1) or (m)(2) of this section, the State agencies in the States where the parties are located shall take evidence and hold the hearing in the same manner as used for appealed interstate unemployment claims in those States, to the extent that such procedures are consistent with § 658.416.

[45 FR 39468, June 10, 1980, as amended at 71 FR 35523, June 21, 2006]

§ 658.418 Decision of the State hearing official.

(a) The State hearing official may:

(1) Rule that the case is improperly before it, that is, that there is a lack of jurisdiction over the case;

(2) Rule that the complaint has been withdrawn properly and in writing;

(3) Rule that reasonable cause exists to believe that the request has been abandoned or that repeated requests for re-scheduling are arbitrary and for the purpose of unduly delaying or avoiding a hearing;

(4) Render such other rulings as are appropriate to the issues in question. However, the State hearing official shall not have jurisdiction to consider the validity or constitutionality of JS regulations or of the Federal statutes under which they are promulgated.

(b) Based on the entire record, including the investigations and determinations of the local and State offices and any evidence provided at the hearing, the State hearing official shall prepare a written decision. The State hearing official shall send a copy of the decision stating the findings and conclusions of law and fact and the reasons therefor to the complainant, the respondent, entities serving as *amicus* capacity (if any), the State office, the Regional Administrator, and the Solicitor of Labor, Attn: Associate Solicitor for Employment and Training Legal Services, Department of Labor, room N2101, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC, 20210. The notification to the complainant and respondent must be sent certified mail.

(c) All decisions of a State hearing official shall be accompanied by a written notice informing the parties (not including the Regional Administrator, the Solicitor of Labor, or entities serving in an *amicus* capacity) that, if they

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are not satisfied, they may, within 20 working days of the certified date of receipt of the decision, file an appeal in writing with the Regional Administrator. The notice shall give the address of the Regional Administrator.

FEDERAL JS COMPLAINT SYSTEM

§ 658.420 Establishment of JS complaint system at the ETA regional office.

(a) Each Regional Administrator shall establish and maintain a JS complaint system at the DOL regional office level.

(b) The Regional Administrator shall designate DOL officials to handle JS-related complaints as follows:

(1) The handling of all JS-related complaints alleging discrimination by race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or physical or mental status unrelated to job performance (handicap), shall be assigned to a Regional Director for Equal Opportunity and Special Review (RDEOSR) and, where appropriate, handled in accordance with procedures at 29 CFR part 31.

(2) The handling of all JS-related complaints other than those described in paragraphs (b)(1) of this section, shall be assigned to a regional office official designated by the Regional Administrator, provided that the regional office official designated to handle MSFW complaints shall be the Regional MSFW Monitor Advocate.

(c) The Regional Administrator shall designate DOL officials to handle non-JS-related complaints in accordance with § 658.422: *Provided*, That the regional official designated to handle MSFW non-JS-related complaints shall be the Regional MSFW Monitor Advocate.

(d) The Regional Administrator shall assure that all JS-related complaints and all correspondence relating thereto are logged, with a notation of the nature of each item.

§ 658.421 Handling of JS-related complaints.

(a) No JS-related complaint shall be handled at the ETA regional office level until the complainant has exhausted the State agency administrative remedies set forth at §§ 658.410