

## § 1603.204

administrative law judge may be designated for the purpose of further hearing or issuing a decision on the record as made, or both.

(b) The administrative law judge may withdraw from the adjudication at any time the administrative law judge deems himself or herself disqualified. Prior to issuance of the decision, any party may move that the administrative law judge withdraw on the ground of personal bias or other disqualification, by filing with the administrative law judge promptly upon discovery of the alleged facts an affidavit setting forth in detail the matters alleged to constitute grounds for withdrawal.

(c) The administrative law judge shall rule upon the motion for withdrawal. If the administrative law judge concludes that the motion is timely and has merit, the administrative law judge shall immediately withdraw from the adjudication. If the administrative law judge does not withdraw, the adjudication shall proceed.

### § 1603.204 Ex parte communications.

(a) Oral or written communications concerning the merits of an adjudication between the administrative law judge or decision-making personnel of the Commission and an interested party to the adjudication without providing the other party a chance to participate are prohibited from the time the matter is assigned to an administrative law judge until the Commission has rendered a final decision. Communications concerning the status of the case, the date of a hearing, the method of transmitting evidence to the Commission and other purely procedural questions are permitted.

(b) Decision-making personnel of the Commission include members of the Commission and their staffs and personnel in the Office of Federal Operations, but do not include investigators and intake staff.

(c) Any communication made in violation of this section shall be made part of the record and an opportunity for rebuttal by the other party allowed. If the communication was oral, a memorandum stating the substance of the discussion shall be placed in the record.

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(d) Where it appears that a party has engaged in prohibited ex parte communications, that party may be required to show cause why, in the interest of justice, his or her claim or defense should not be dismissed, denied or otherwise adversely affected.

### § 1603.205 Separation of functions.

(a) The administrative law judge may not be responsible to or subject to the supervision or direction of a Commission employee engaged in investigating complaints under this part.

(b) No Commission employee engaged in investigating complaints under this part shall participate or advise in the decision of the administrative law judge, except as a witness or counsel in the adjudication, or its appellate review.

### § 1603.206 Consolidation and severance of hearings.

(a) The administrative law judge may, upon motion by a party or upon his or her own motion, after providing reasonable notice and opportunity to object to all parties affected, consolidate any or all matters at issue in two or more adjudications docketed under this part where common parties, or factual or legal questions exist; where such consolidation would expedite or simplify consideration of the issues; or where the interests of justice would be served. For purposes of this section, no distinction is made between joinder and consolidation of adjudications.

(b) The administrative law judge may, upon motion of a party or upon his or her own motion, for good cause shown, order any adjudication severed with respect to some or all parties, claims or issues.

### § 1603.207 Intervention.

(a) Any person or entity that wishes to intervene in any proceeding under this subpart shall file a motion to intervene in accordance with § 1603.208.

(b) A motion to intervene shall indicate the question of law or fact common to the movant's claim or defense and the complaint at issue and state all other facts or reasons the movant should be permitted to intervene.

(c) Any party may file a response to a motion to intervene within 15 days

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after the filing of the motion to intervene.

### § 1603.208 Motions.

(a) All motions shall state the specific relief requested. All motions shall be in writing, except that a motion may be made orally during a conference or during the hearing. After providing an opportunity for response, the administrative law judge may rule on an oral motion immediately or may require that it be submitted in writing.

(b) Unless otherwise directed by the administrative law judge, any other party may file a response in support of or in opposition to any written motion within ten (10) business days after service of the motion. If no response is filed within the response period, the party failing to respond shall be deemed to have waived any objection to the granting of the motion. The moving party shall have no right to reply to a response, unless the administrative law judge, in his or her discretion, orders that a reply be filed.

(c) Except for procedural matters, the administrative law judge may not grant a written motion prior to the expiration of the time for filing responses. The administrative law judge may deny a written motion without awaiting a response. The administrative law judge may allow oral argument (including that made by telephone) on written motions. Any party adversely affected by the *ex parte* grant of a motion for a procedural order may request, within five (5) business days of service of the order, that the administrative law judge reconsider, vacate or modify the order.

(d) The administrative law judge may summarily deny dilatory, repetitive or frivolous motions. Unless otherwise ordered by the administrative law judge, the filing of a motion does not stay the proceeding.

(e) All motions and responses must comply with the filing and service requirements of § 1603.209.

### § 1603.209 Filing and service.

(a) Unless otherwise ordered by the administrative law judge, a signed original of each motion, brief or other document shall be filed with the administrative law judge, with a certifi-

cate of service indicating that a copy has been sent to all other parties, and the date and manner of service. All documents shall be on standard size (8½ × 11) paper. Each document filed shall be clear and legible.

(b) Filing and service shall be made by first class mail or other more expeditious means of delivery, including, at the discretion of the administrative law judge, by facsimile. The administrative law judge, may in his discretion, limit the number of pages that may be filed or served by facsimile. Service shall be made on a party's representative, or, if not represented, on the party.

(c) Every document shall contain a caption, the complaint number or docket number assigned to the matter, a designation of the type of filing (e.g., motion, brief, etc.), and the filing person's signature, address, telephone number and telecopier number, if any.

### § 1603.210 Discovery.

(a) Unless otherwise ordered by the administrative law judge, discovery may begin as soon as the complaint has been transmitted to the administrative law judge pursuant to § 1603.201. Discovery shall be completed as expeditiously as possible within such time as the administrative law judge directs.

(b) Unless otherwise ordered by the administrative law judge, parties may obtain discovery by written interrogatories (not to exceed 20 interrogatories including subparts), depositions upon oral examination or written questions, requests for production of documents or things for inspection or other purposes, requests for admission or any other method found reasonable and appropriate by the administrative law judge.

(c) Except as otherwise specified, the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure shall govern discovery in proceedings under this part.

(d) Neutral mediators who have participated in the alternative dispute resolution process in accordance with § 1603.108 shall not be called as witnesses or be subject to discovery in any adjudication under this part.