

Department of Veterans Affairs

§ 18b.95

(b) A copy of the letters to the congressional committees will be sent to all parties to the proceedings.

[35 FR 10760, July 2, 1970, as amended at 51 FR 10387, Mar. 26, 1986; 54 FR 34984, Aug. 23, 1989]

JUDICIAL STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

§ 18b.90 Conduct.

Parties and their representatives are expected to conduct themselves with honor and dignity and observe judicial standards of practice and ethics in all proceedings. They should not indulge in offensive personalities, unseemly wrangling, or intemperate accusations or characterizations. A representative of any party whether or not a lawyer shall observe the traditional responsibilities of lawyers as officers of the court and use best efforts to restrain the principal represented from improprieties in connection with a proceeding.

[35 FR 10760, July 2, 1970, as amended at 51 FR 10387, Mar. 26, 1986]

§ 18b.91 Improper conduct.

With respect to any proceeding it is improper for any interested person to attempt to sway the judgment of the reviewing authority by undertaking to bring pressure or influence to bear upon the reviewing authority or any officer having a responsibility for a decision in the proceeding, or decisional staff. It is improper that such interested persons or any members of the Department of Veterans Affairs's staff or the presiding officer give statements to communications media, by paid advertisement or otherwise, designed to influence the judgment of any officer having a responsibility for a decision in the proceeding, or decisional staff. It is improper for any person to solicit communications to any such officer, or decisional staff, other than proper communications by parties or amici curiae.

[35 FR 10760, July 2, 1970, as amended at 51 FR 10387, Mar. 26, 1986]

§ 18b.92 Ex parte communications.

Only persons employed by or assigned to work with the reviewing authority who perform no investigative or prosecuting function in connection

with a proceeding shall communicate ex parte with the reviewing authority or the presiding officer, or any employee or person involved in the decisional process in such proceedings with respect to the merits of that or a factually related proceeding. The reviewing authority, the presiding officer, or any employee or person involved in the decisional process of a proceeding shall communicate ex parte with respect to the merits of that or a factually related proceeding only with persons employed by or assigned to work with them and who perform no investigative or prosecuting function in connection with the proceeding.

§ 18b.93 Expeditious treatment.

Requests for expeditious treatment of matters pending before the reviewing authority or the presiding officer are deemed communications on the merits, and are improper except when forwarded from parties to a proceeding and served upon all other parties thereto. Such communications should be in the form of a motion.

§ 18b.94 Matters not prohibited.

A request for information which merely inquires about the status of a proceeding without discussing issues or expressing points of view is not deemed an ex parte communication. Such requests should be directed to the civil rights hearing clerk. Communications with respect to minor procedural matters or inquiries or emergency requests for extensions of time are not deemed ex parte communications prohibited by § 18b.92. Where feasible, however, such communications should be by letter with copies to all parties. Ex parte communications between a respondent and the responsible agency official or the Secretary with respect to securing such respondent's voluntary compliance with any requirement of part 18 of this chapter are not prohibited.

§ 18b.95 Filing of ex parte communications.

A prohibited communication in writing received by the Secretary, the reviewing authority, or by the presiding officer, shall be made public by placing it in the correspondence file of the