

### Subpart F—How Do I Count Days for Purposes of Deadlines and What Happens if I Miss a Deadline in These Rules?

#### § 15f.27 When is something considered “filed” as required by these rules and to whom do I need to give copies of what I file?

A document, or other item, that must be “filed” under these rules is considered filed when postmarked or when it is received and date-stamped by the Docketing Clerk.

#### § 15f.28 When I or someone else has to do something within a certain number of days, how will USDA or the ALJ count the days?

Unless otherwise specifically noted, a “day” refers to a calendar day and a document that must be filed by a certain date must either be postmarked on that date or received by the Docketing Clerk on that date. For documents that must be or are “filed” under these regulations, you count the number of days after filing starting with the day after the filing date as day one. For other time periods, you calculate the time period by counting the day after receipt by the party as day one. If the last day of a time period expires on a Saturday, a Sunday, or a Federal holiday, the last day of the time period will expire on the next business day.

#### § 15f.29 May I request an extension of a deadline or may I get relief for missing a deadline in these rules?

You may request that the ALJ extend a deadline in these rules, or afford you relief for missing a deadline, which he or she may do, consistent with the principles of sovereign immunity, the terms of any applicable statute, these rules, and the necessity of expeditious completion of the public business. It is the intent of USDA that the time deadlines expressed in these regulations be construed equitably to ensure resolution of eligible complaints, to the extent permitted by law.

## PART 16—EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

### Sec.

- 16.1 Purpose and applicability.
- 16.2 Rights of religious organizations.
- 16.3 Responsibilities of participating organizations.
- 16.4 Effect on State and local funds.
- 16.5 Compliance.

AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 301; E.O. 13279, 67 FR 77141, 3 CFR, 2002 Comp., p. 258; E.O. 13280, 67 FR 77145, 3 CFR, 2002 Comp., p. 262.

SOURCE: 69 FR 41382, July 9, 2004, unless otherwise noted.

### § 16.1 Purpose and applicability.

(a) The purpose of this part is to set forth USDA policy regarding equal opportunity for religious organizations to participate in USDA assistance programs for which other private organizations are eligible.

(b) Except as otherwise specifically provided in this part, the policy outlined in this part applies to all recipients and subrecipients of USDA assistance to which 7 CFR parts 3015, 3016, or 3019 apply, and to recipients and subrecipients of Commodity Credit Corporation assistance that is administered by agencies of USDA.

### § 16.2 Rights of religious organizations.

(a) A religious organization is eligible, on the same basis as any other eligible private organization, to access and participate in USDA assistance programs. Neither the Federal government nor a State or local government receiving USDA assistance shall, in the selection of service providers, discriminate for or against a religious organization on the basis of the organization’s religious character or affiliation.

(b) A religious organization that participates in USDA assistance programs will retain its independence and may continue to carry out its mission, including the definition, practice, and expression of its religious beliefs, provided that it does not use USDA direct assistance to support any inherently religious activities, such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization. Among other things, a religious organization may: