

§ 54.21

request may require that it be confirmed in writing. Requests for appeal service received through an official grader or an office of grading shall be transmitted promptly to the Chief for instructions.

§ 54.21 When request for appeal service may be withdrawn.

A request for appeal service may be withdrawn by the applicant at any time before the appeal service has been performed, upon payment of any expenses already incurred under the regulations by the Branch in connection therewith.

§ 54.22 Denial or withdrawal of appeal service.

A request for appeal service may be rejected or such service may be otherwise denied to or withdrawn from any person, without a hearing, in accordance with the procedure set forth in § 54.11(b), if it shall appear that the person or product involved is not eligible for appeal service under § 54.19, or that the identity of the product has been lost; or for any of the causes set forth in § 54.11(b). Appeal service may also be denied to, or withdrawn from, any person in any case under § 54.11(a), in accordance with the procedure set forth in said section.

§ 54.23 Who shall perform appeal service.

Appeal service for products shall be performed by official graders designated by the Chief or by the official in charge of an office of grading when so authorized by the Chief, and shall be conducted jointly by two official graders, or more when practicable. No official grader shall perform appeal service for any product for which he previously performed the service.

§ 54.24 Appeal certificates.

Immediately after appeal service has been performed for any products, a certificate designated as an "appeal certificate" shall be prepared, signed, and issued referring specifically to the original certificate and stating the class, grade, other quality, or compliance of the products as shown by the appeal service.

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§ 54.25 Superseded certificates.

The appeal certificate shall supersede the original certificate which, thereupon, shall become null and void and shall not thereafter be deemed to show the class, grade, other quality, or compliance of the products described therein. However, the fees charged for the original service shall not be remitted. If the original and all copies of the superseded certificate are not delivered to the official with whom the request for appeal service is filed, the official graders issuing the appeal certificate shall forward notice of such issuance and of the cancellation of the original certificate to such persons as they may deem necessary to prevent fraudulent use of the superseded certificate.

§ 54.26 Application of other regulations to appeal service.

The regulations in §§ 54.1 through 54.18 and §§ 54.27 through 54.30 shall apply to appeal service except insofar as they are manifestly inapplicable.

CHARGES FOR SERVICE

§ 54.27 Fees and other charges for service.

(a) Fees and other charges equal as nearly as may be to the cost of the services rendered shall be assessed and collected from applicants in accordance with the following provisions unless otherwise provided in the cooperative agreement under which the services are furnished, or as provided in § 54.6. For each calendar year, AMS will calculate the rate for inspection, grading, or certification services, per hour per program employee using the following formulas:

(1) *Regular rate.* The total AMS grading, inspection, or certification program personnel direct pay divided by direct hours, which is then multiplied by the next year's percentage of cost of living increase, plus the benefits rate, plus the operating rate, plus the allowance for bad debt rate. If applicable, travel expenses may also be added to the cost of providing the service.

(2) *Overtime rate.* The total AMS grading, inspection, or certification program personnel direct pay divided by direct hours, which is then multiplied by the next year's percentage of cost of

living increase and then multiplied by 1.5 plus the benefits rate, plus the operating rate, plus an allowance for bad debt. If applicable, travel expenses may also be added to the cost of providing the service.

(3) *Holiday rate.* The total AMS grading, inspection, or certification program personnel direct pay divided by direct hours which is then multiplied by the next year's percentage of cost of living increase and then multiplied by 2, plus benefits rate, plus the operating rate, plus an allowance for bad debt. If applicable, travel expenses may also be added to the cost of providing the service.

(b)(1) For each calendar year, based on previous fiscal year/historical actual costs, AMS will calculate the benefits, operating, and allowance for bad debt components of the regular, overtime and holiday rates as follows:

(i) *Benefits rate.* The total AMS grading, inspection, or certification program direct benefits costs divided by the total hours (regular, overtime, and holiday) worked, which is then multiplied by the next calendar year's percentage cost of living increase. Some examples of direct benefits are health insurance, retirement, life insurance, and Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) retirement basic and matching contributions.

(ii) *Operating rate.* The total AMS grading, inspection, or certification program operating costs divided by total hours (regular, overtime, and holiday) worked, which is then multiplied by the percentage of inflation.

(iii) *Allowance for bad debt rate.* Total AMS grading, inspection, or certification program allowance for bad debt divided by total hours (regular, overtime, and holiday) worked.

(2) The calendar year cost of living expenses and percentage of inflation factors used in the formulas in this section are based on the most recent Office of Management and Budget's Presidential Economic Assumptions.

(c) *Fees for service on commitment basis.* Minimum fees for service performed under a commitment agreement or an agreement by memorandum shall be on the basis of 8 hours per day, Monday through Friday, excluding Federal legal holidays occurring Mon-

day through Friday on which no grading and certification services are performed. Fees will be based on the formulas in this section. The Agency reserves the right under such a commitment agreement or agreement by memorandum to use any grader assigned to the plant on a commitment basis to perform service for other applicants, as provided in § 54.6(c), crediting the commitment applicant with the number of hours charged to the other applicant, provided the allowable credit hours plus hours actually worked for the applicants do not exceed 8 hours on any day, Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays.

(d) *Fees for appeal service.* Fees for appeal service shall be determined on the basis of the time of two official graders required to render the service, including the time required for the preparation of certificates and travel of such graders in connection with the performance of the service. *Provided*, that when on appeal it is found that there was error in the original determination equal to or exceeding ten percent of the total number of similar units of the products involved, no charge will be made for the appeal service unless a special agreement therefor was made with the applicant in advance.

(e) *Fees for extra copies of certificates.* In addition to copies of certificates furnished under § 54.14, any financially interested person may obtain not to exceed three copies of any such certificate within one year from its date of issuance upon payment of a fee, and not to exceed three copies of any such certificate at any time thereafter, while a copy of such certificate is on file in the Department. The fee for copies of certificates will be determined using the formulas in this section.

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§ 54.28 Payment of fees and other charges.

Fees and other charges for service shall be paid in accordance with the following provisions unless otherwise provided in the cooperative agreement under which the service is furnished. Upon receipt of billing for fees and other charges for service the applicant shall remit by check, draft, or money