

with the day following the act, event, or default, and includes the last day of the period unless it is Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday observed by the Federal Government in which case the time period includes the next business day. When the period of time prescribed is seven (7) days or less, intermediate Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays shall be excluded in the computation.

(b) Computation of time for filing by mail. Pleadings are not deemed filed until received by the Office of the Chief Administrative Hearing Officer or Administrative Law Judge assigned to the case.

(c) Computation of time for service by mail.

(1) Service of all pleadings other than complaints is deemed effective at the time of mailing; and

(2) Whenever a party has the right or is required to take some action within a prescribed period after the service upon such party of a pleading, notice, or other document (other than a complaint or a subpoena) and the pleading, notice, or document is served by ordinary mail, five (5) days shall be added to the prescribed period unless the compliance date is otherwise specified by the Chief Administrative Hearing Officer or the Administrative Law Judge.

[54 FR 48596, Nov. 24, 1989. Redesignated and amended by Order No. 1534-91, 56 FR 50053, 50054, Oct. 3, 1991; Order No. 1635-92, 57 FR 57672, Dec. 7, 1992]

§ 68.9 Responsive pleadings—answer.

(a) *Time for answer.* Within thirty (30) days after the service of a complaint, each respondent shall file an answer.

(b) *Default.* Failure of the respondent to file an answer within the time provided may be deemed to constitute a waiver of his or her right to appear and contest the allegations of the complaint. The Administrative Law Judge may enter a judgment by default.

(c) *Answer.* Any respondent contesting any material fact alleged in a complaint, or contending that the amount of a proposed penalty or award is excessive or inappropriate, or contending that he or she is entitled to judgment as a matter of law, shall file

an answer in writing. The answer shall include:

(1) A statement that the respondent admits, denies, or does not have and is unable to obtain sufficient information to admit or deny each allegation; a statement of lack of information shall have the effect of a denial (any allegation not expressly denied shall be deemed to be admitted); and

(2) A statement of the facts supporting each affirmative defense.

(d) *Reply.* Complainants may file a reply responding to each affirmative defense asserted.

(e) *Amendments and supplemental pleadings.* If a determination of a controversy on the merits will be facilitated thereby, the Administrative Law Judge may, upon such conditions as are necessary to avoid prejudicing the public interest and the rights of the parties, allow appropriate amendments to complaints and other pleadings at any time prior to the issuance of the Administrative Law Judge's final order based on the complaint. When issues not raised by the pleadings are reasonably within the scope of the original complaint and are tried by express or implied consent of the parties, they shall be treated in all respects as if they had been raised in the pleadings, and such amendments may be made as necessary to make the pleading conform to the evidence. The Administrative Law Judge may, upon reasonable notice and such terms as are just, permit supplemental pleadings setting forth transactions, occurrences, or events that have occurred or new law promulgated since the date of the pleadings and which are relevant to any of the issues involved.

[Order No. 2203-99, 64 FR 7075, Feb. 12, 1999]

§ 68.10 Motion to dismiss for failure to state a claim upon which relief can be granted.

(a) The respondent, without waiving the right to offer evidence in the event that the motion is not granted, may move for a dismissal of the complaint on the ground that the complainant has failed to state a claim upon which relief can be granted. The filing of a motion to dismiss does not affect the time period for filing an answer.