

# CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS

## TITLE 25—INDIANS

### CHAPTER I—BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

#### PART 2—APPEALS FROM ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

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#### **§ 2.1 Information collection.**

In accordance with Office of Management and Budget regulations in 5 CFR 1320.3(c), approval of information collections contained in this regulation is not required.

#### **§ 2.2 Definitions.**

*Appeal* means a written request for review of an action or the inaction of an official of the Bureau of Indian Affairs that is claimed to adversely affect the interested party making the request.

*Appellant* means any interested party who files an appeal under this part.

*Interested party* means any person whose interests could be adversely affected by a decision in an appeal.

*Legal holiday* means a Federal holiday as designated by the President or the Congress of the United States.

*Notice of appeal* means the written document sent to the official designated in this part, indicating that a decision is being appealed (see § 2.9).

*Person* includes any Indian or non-Indian individual, corporation, tribe or other organization.

*Statement of reasons* means a written document submitted by the appellant explaining why the decision being appealed is in error (see § 2.10).

### **§ 2.3 Applicability.**

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, this part applies to all appeals from decisions made by officials of the Bureau of Indian Affairs by persons who may be adversely affected by such decisions.

(b) This part does not apply if any other regulation or Federal statute provides a different administrative appeal procedure applicable to a specific type of decision.

### **§ 2.4 Officials who may decide appeals.**

The following officials may decide appeals:

(a) An Area Director, if the subject of appeal is a decision by a person under the authority of that Area Director.

(b) An Area Education Programs Administrator, Agency Superintendent for Education, President of a Post-Secondary School, or the Deputy to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs/Director (Indian Education Programs), if the appeal is from a decision by an Office of Indian Education Programs (OIEP) official under his/her jurisdiction.

(c) The Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs pursuant to the provisions of § 2.20 of this part.

(d) A Deputy to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs pursuant to the provisions of § 2.20(c) of this part.

(e) The Interior Board of Indian Appeals, pursuant to the provisions of 43 CFR part 4, subpart D, if the appeal is from a decision made by an Area Director or a Deputy to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs other than the Deputy to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs/Director (Indian Education Programs).

### **§ 2.5 Appeal bond.**

(a) If a person believes that he/she may suffer a measurable and substantial financial loss as a direct result of the delay caused by an appeal, that person may request that the official before whom the appeal is pending require the posting of a reasonable bond by the appellant adequate to protect against that financial loss.

(b) A person requesting that a bond be posted bears the burden of proving the likelihood that he/she may suffer a measurable and substantial financial loss as a direct result of the delay caused by the appeal.

(c) In those cases in which the official before whom an appeal is pending determines that a bond is necessary to protect the financial interests of an Indian or Indian tribe, that official may require the posting of a bond on his/her own initiative.

(d) Where the official before whom an appeal is pending requires a bond to be posted or denies a request that a bond be posted, he/she shall give notice of his/her decision pursuant to § 2.7.

## **§ 2.6 Finality of decisions.**

(a) No decision, which at the time of its rendition is subject to appeal to a superior authority in the Department, shall be considered final so as to constitute Departmental action subject to judicial review under 5 U.S.C. 704, unless when an appeal is filed, the official to whom the appeal is made determines that public safety, protection of trust resources, or other public exigency requires that the decision be made effective immediately.

(b) Decisions made by officials of the Bureau of Indian Affairs shall be effective when the time for filing a notice of appeal has expired and no notice of appeal has been filed.

(c) Decisions made by the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs shall be final for the Department and effective immediately unless the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs provides otherwise in the decision.

## **§ 2.7 Notice of administrative decision or action.**

(a) The official making a decision shall give all interested parties known to the decisionmaker written notice of the decision by personal delivery or mail.

(b) Failure to give such notice shall not affect the validity of the decision or action but the time to file a notice of appeal regarding such a decision shall not begin to run until notice has been given in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section.

(c) All written decisions, except decisions which are final for the Department pursuant to § 2.6(c), shall include a statement that the decision may be appealed pursuant to this part, identify the official to whom it may be appealed and indicate the appeal procedures, including the 30-day time limit for filing a notice of appeal.

## **§ 2.8 Appeal from inaction of official.**

(a) A person or persons whose interests are adversely affected, or whose ability to protect such interests is impeded by the failure of an official to act on a request to the official, can make the official's inaction the subject of appeal, as follows:

(1) Request in writing that the official take the action originally asked of him/her;

(2) Describe the interest adversely affected by the official's inaction, including a description of the loss, impairment or impediment of such interest caused by the official's inaction;

(3) State that, unless the official involved either takes action on the merits of the written request within 10 days of receipt of such request by the official, or establishes a date by which action will be taken, an appeal shall be filed in accordance with this part.

(b) The official receiving a request as specified in paragraph (a) of this section must either make a decision on the merits of the initial request within 10 days from receipt of the

request for a decision or establish a reasonable later date by which the decision shall be made, not to exceed 60 days from the date of request. If an official establishes a date by which a requested decision shall be made, this date shall be the date by which failure to make a decision shall be appealable under this part. If the official, within the 10-day period specified in paragraph (a) of this section, neither makes a decision on the merits of the initial request nor establishes a later date by which a decision shall be made, the official's inaction shall be appealable to the next official in the process established in this part.

### **§ 2.9 Notice of an appeal.**

(a) An appellant must file a written notice of appeal in the office of the official whose decision is being appealed. The appellant must also send a copy of the notice of appeal to the official who will decide the appeal and to all known interested parties. The notice of appeal must be filed in the office of the official whose decision is being appealed within 30 days of receipt by the appellant of the notice of administrative action described in § 2.7. A notice of appeal that is filed by mail is considered filed on the date that it is postmarked. The burden of proof of timely filing is on the appellant. No extension of time shall be granted for filing a notice of appeal. Notices of appeal not filed in the specified time shall not be considered, and the decision involved shall be considered final for the Department and effective in accordance with § 2.6(b).

(b) When the appellant is an Indian or Indian tribe not represented by counsel, the official who issued the decision appealed shall, upon request of the appellant, render such assistance as is appropriate in the preparation of the appeal.

(c) The notice of appeal shall:

(1) Include name, address, and phone number of appellant.

(2) Be clearly labeled or titled with the words "NOTICE OF APPEAL."

(3) Have on the face of any envelope in which the notice is mailed or delivered, in addition to the address, the clearly visible words "NOTICE OF APPEAL."

(4) Contain a statement of the decision being appealed that is sufficient to permit identification of the decision.

(5) If possible, attach either a copy of the notice of the administrative decision received under § 2.7, or when an official has failed to make a decision or take any action, attach a copy of the appellant's request for a decision or action under § 2.8 with a written statement that the official failed to make a decision or take any action or to establish a date by which a decision would be made upon the request.

(6) Certify that copies of the notice of appeal have been served on interested parties, as prescribed in § 2.12(a).

### **§ 2.10 Statement of reasons.**

(a) A statement of reasons shall be filed by the appellant in every appeal, and shall be accompanied by or otherwise incorporate all supporting documents.

(b) The statement of reasons may be included in or filed with the notice of appeal.

(c) If the statement of reasons is not filed with the notice of appeal, the appellant shall file a separate statement of reasons in the office of the official whose decision is being appealed within 30 days after the notice of appeal was filed in that office.

(d) The statement of reasons whether filed with the notice of appeal or filed separately should:

(1) Be clearly labeled “STATEMENT OF REASONS.”

(2) Have on the face of any envelope in which the statement of reasons is mailed or delivered, in addition to the address, the clearly visible words “STATEMENT OF REASONS.”

### **§ 2.11 Answer of interested party.**

(a) Any interested party wishing to participate in an appeal proceeding should file a written answer responding to the appellant’s notice of appeal and statement of reasons. An answer should describe the party’s interest.

(b) An answer shall state the party’s position or response to the appeal in any manner the party deems appropriate and may be accompanied by or otherwise incorporate supporting documents.

(c) An answer must be filed within 30 days after receipt of the statement of reasons by the person filing an answer.

(d) An answer and any supporting documents shall be filed in the office of the official before whom the appeal is pending as specified in § 2.13.

(e) An answer should:

(1) Be clearly labelled or titled with the words “ANSWER OF INTERESTED PARTY.”

(2) Have on the face of any envelope in which the answer is mailed or delivered, in addition to the address, the clearly visible words “ANSWER OF INTERESTED PARTY,” and

(3) Contain a statement of the decision being appealed that is sufficient to permit identification of the decision.

### **§ 2.12 Service of appeal documents.**

(a) Persons filing documents in an appeal must serve copies of those documents on all other interested parties known to the person making the filing. A person serving a document either by mail or personal delivery must, at the time of filing the document, also file a written statement certifying service on each interested party, showing the document involved, the name and address of the party served, and the date of service.

(b) If an appeal is filed with the Interior Board of Indian Appeals, a copy of the notice of appeal shall also be sent to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs. The notice of appeal sent to the Interior Board of Indian Appeals shall certify that a copy has been sent to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs.

(c) If the appellant is an Indian or Indian tribe not represented by counsel, the official with whom the appeal is filed (i.e., official making the decision being appealed) shall, in the manner prescribed in this section, personally or by mail serve a copy of all appeal documents on the official who will decide the appeal and on each interested party known to the official making such service.

(d) Service of any document under this part shall be by personal delivery or by mail to the record address as specified in § 2.14. Service on a tribe shall be to the principal or designated tribal official or to the governing body.

(e) In all cases where a party is represented by an attorney in an appeal, service of any document on the attorney is service on the party represented. Where a party is represented by

more than one attorney, service on any one attorney is sufficient. The certificate of service on an attorney shall include the name of the party whom the attorney represents and indicate that service was made on the attorney representing that party.

(f) When an official deciding an appeal determines that there has not been service of a document affecting a person's interest, the official shall either serve the document on the person or direct the appropriate legal counsel to serve the document on the person and allow the person an opportunity to respond.

### **§ 2.13 Filing documents.**

(a) An appeal document is properly filed with an official of the Bureau of Indian Affairs:

(1) By personal delivery during regular business hours to the person designated to receive mail in the immediate office of the official, or

(2) By mail to the facility officially designated for receipt of mail addressed to the official; the document is considered filed by mail on the date that it is postmarked.

(b) Bureau of Indian Affairs offices receiving a misdirected appeal document shall forward the document to the proper office promptly. If a person delivers an appeal document to the wrong office or mails an appeal document to an incorrect address, no extension of time should be allowed because of the time necessary for a Bureau office to redirect the document to the correct address.

(c) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, an official deciding an appeal shall allow late filing of a misdirected document, including a notice of appeal, where the official finds that the misdirection is the fault of the government.

### **§ 2.14 Record address.**

(a) Every interested party who files a document in connection with an appeal shall, when he/she files the document, also indicate his/her address. Thereafter, any change of address shall be promptly reported to the official with whom the previous address was filed. The most current address on file under this subsection shall be deemed the proper address for all purposes under this part.

(b) The successors in interest of a party shall also promptly inform the official specified in paragraph (a) of this section of their interest in the appeal and their address.

(c) An appellant or interested party failing to file an address or change of address as specified in this section may not object to lack of notice or service attributable to his/her failure to indicate a new address.

### **§ 2.15 Computation of time.**

In computing any period of time prescribed or allowed in this part, calendar days shall be used. Computation shall not include the day on which a decision being appealed was made, service or notice was received, a document was filed, or other event occurred causing time to begin to run. Computation shall include the last day of the period, unless it is a Saturday, a Sunday, or a legal holiday, in which event the period runs until the end of the next day which is not a Saturday, a Sunday, or a legal holiday.

## **§ 2.16 Extensions of time.**

An official to whom an appeal is made may, upon a showing of good cause by a party and with notice to all other parties, extend the period for filing or serving any document; provided, however, that no extension will be granted for filing a notice of appeal under § 2.9 of this part or serve by itself to extend any period specified by law or regulation other than in this part.

## **§ 2.17 Summary dismissal.**

(a) An appeal under this part will be dismissed if the notice of appeal is not filed within the time specified in § 2.9(a).

(b) An appeal under this part may be subject to summary dismissal for the following causes:

(1) If after the appellant is given an opportunity to amend them, the appeal documents do not state the reasons why the appellant believes the decision being appealed is in error, or the reasons for the appeal are not otherwise evident in the documents, or

(2) If the appellant has been required to post a bond and fails to do so.

## **§ 2.18 Consolidation of appeals.**

Separate proceedings pending before one official under this part and involving common questions of law or fact may be consolidated by the official conducting such proceedings, pursuant to a motion by any party or on the initiative of the official.

## **§ 2.19 Action by Area Directors and Education Programs officials on appeal.**

(a) Area Directors, Area Education Programs Administrators, Agency Superintendents for Education, Presidents of Post-Secondary Schools and the Deputy to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs/Director (Indian Education Programs) shall render written decisions in all cases appealed to them within 60 days after all time for pleadings (including all extensions granted) has expired. The decision shall include a statement that the decision may be appealed pursuant to this part, identify the official to whom it may be appealed and indicate the appeal procedures, including the 30-day time limit for filing a notice of appeal.

(b) A copy of the decision shall be sent to the appellant and each known interested party by certified or registered mail, return receipt requested. Such receipts shall become a permanent part of the record.

## **§ 2.20 Action by the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs on appeal.**

(a) When a decision is appealed to the Interior Board of Indian Appeals, a copy of the notice of appeal shall be sent to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs.

(b) The notice of appeal sent to the Interior Board of Indian Appeals shall certify that a copy has been sent to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs.

(c) In accordance with the provisions of § 4.332(b) of title 43 of the Code of Federal Regulations, a notice of appeal to the Board of Indian Appeals shall not be effective until 20 days

after receipt by the Board, during which time the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs shall have authority to decide to:

(1) Issue a decision in the appeal, or

(2) Assign responsibility to issue a decision in the appeal to a Deputy to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs.

The Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs will not consider petitions to exercise this authority. If the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs decides to issue a decision in the appeal or to assign responsibility to issue a decision in the appeal to a Deputy to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs, he/she shall notify the Board of Indian Appeals, the deciding official, the appellant, and interested parties within 15 days of his/her receipt of a copy of the notice of appeal. Upon receipt of such notification, the Board of Indian Appeals shall transfer the appeal to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs. The decision shall be signed by the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs or a Deputy to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs within 60 days after all time for pleadings (including all extensions granted) has expired. If the decision is signed by the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs, it shall be final for the Department and effective immediately unless the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs provides otherwise in the decision. Except as otherwise provided in § 2.20(g), if the decision is signed by a Deputy to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs, it may be appealed to the Board of Indian Appeals pursuant to the provisions of 43 CFR part 4, subpart D.

(d) A copy of the decision shall be sent to the appellant and each known interested party by certified or registered mail, return receipt requested. Such receipts shall become a permanent part of the record.

(e) If the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs or the Deputy to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs to whom the authority to issue a decision has been assigned pursuant to § 2.20(c) does not make a decision within 60 days after all time for pleadings (including all extensions granted) has expired, any party may move the Board of Indian Appeals to assume jurisdiction subject to 43 CFR 4.337(b). A motion for Board decision under this section shall invest the Board with jurisdiction as of the date the motion is received by the Board.

(f) When the Board of Indian Appeals, in accordance with 43 CFR 4.337(b), refers an appeal containing one or more discretionary issues to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs for further consideration, the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs shall take action on the appeal consistent with the procedures in this section.

(g) The Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs shall render a written decision in an appeal from a decision of the Deputy to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs/Director (Indian Education Programs) within 60 days after all time for pleadings (including all extensions granted) has expired. A copy of the decision shall be sent to the appellant and each known interested party by certified or registered mail, return receipt requested. Such receipts shall become a permanent part of the record. The decision shall be final for the Department and effective immediately unless the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs provides otherwise in the decision.

## **§ 2.21 Scope of review.**

(a) When a decision has been appealed, any information available to the reviewing official may be used in reaching a decision whether part of the record or not.

(b) When the official deciding an appeal believes it appropriate to consider documents or information not contained in the record on appeal, the official shall notify all interested parties of the information and they shall be given not less than 10 days to comment on the information before the appeal is decided. The deciding official shall include in the record copies of documents or a description of the information used in arriving at the decision. Except where disclosure of the actual documents used may be prohibited by law, copies of the information shall be made available to the parties upon request and at their expense.