

Judicial Officer, or by delegation the Associate Judicial Officer, in his sole discretion, grants review upon appeal of either party filed within that period, or on his own motion within that period. If an appeal is denied, the initial or tentative decision becomes the final agency decision on the issuance of such denial. The judicial Officer's decision on appeal is the final agency decision with no further agency review or appeal rights.

**§ 965.13 Compromise and informal disposition.**

Nothing in these rules precludes the compromise, settlement, and informal disposition of proceedings initiated under these rules at any time prior to the issuance of the final agency decision.

**§ 965.14 Public Information.**

The Librarian of the Postal Service maintains for public inspection in the Library copies of all initial, tentative, and final agency decisions and orders. The Recorder maintains the complete official record of every proceeding.

[52 FR 29012, Aug. 5, 1987, as amended at 63 FR 66053, Dec. 1, 1998]

**PART 966—RULES OF PRACTICE IN PROCEEDINGS RELATIVE TO ADMINISTRATIVE OFFSETS INITIATED AGAINST FORMER EMPLOYEES OF THE POSTAL SERVICE**

Sec.

- 966.1 Authority for rules.
- 966.2 Scope of rules.
- 966.3 Definitions.
- 966.4 Petition for a hearing and supplement to petition.
- 966.5 Effect of petition filing.
- 966.6 Filing, docketing and serving documents; computation of time; representation of parties.
- 966.7 Answer to petition.
- 966.8 Authority and responsibilities of Hearing Official or Judicial Officer.
- 966.9 Opportunity for oral hearing.
- 966.10 Initial decision.
- 966.11 Appeal.
- 966.12 Waiver of rights.
- 966.13 Ex parte communications.

AUTHORITY: 39 U.S.C. 204, 401, 2601.

SOURCE: 62 FR 63279, Nov. 28, 1997, unless otherwise noted.

**§ 966.1 Authority for rules.**

These rules of practice are issued by the Judicial Officer pursuant to authority delegated by the Postmaster General.

**§ 966.2 Scope of rules.**

The rules in this part apply to any petition filed by a former postal employee:

(a) To challenge the Postal Service's determination that he or she is liable to the Postal Service for a debt incurred in connection with his or her Postal Service employment; and/or

(b) To challenge the administrative offset schedule proposed by the Postal Service for collecting any such debt.

**§ 966.3 Definitions.**

(a) *Administrative offset* refers to the withholding of money payable by the Postal Service or the United States to, or held by the Postal Service or the United States for, a former employee in order to satisfy a debt determined to be owed by the former employee to the Postal Service.

(b) *Debt* refers to any amount determined by the Postal Service to be owed to the Postal Service by a former employee.

(c) *Former employee* refers to an individual whose employment with the Postal Service has ceased. An employee is considered formally separated from the Postal Service rolls as of close of business on the effective date of his or her separation. Postal Service Form 50.

(d) *General Counsel* refers to the General Counsel of the Postal Service, and includes a designated representative.

(e) *Hearing Official* refers to an Administrative Law Judge qualified to hear cases under the Administrative Procedure Act, an Administrative Judge appointed under the Contract Disputes Act of 1978, or any other qualified person licensed to practice law designated by the Judicial Officer to preside over a hearing conducted pursuant to this part.

(f) *Judicial Officer* refers to the Judicial Officer, Associate Judicial Officer, or Acting Judicial Officer of the Postal Service.

(g) *Postmaster/Installation Head* refers to the top management official at a