

AGENCY SNAPSHOTS

Division of Administrative Hearings

by Lisa Shearer Nelson

When most people think of DOAH, they think of administrative law judges handling administrative disputes pursuant to section 120.57(1), Florida Statutes. In reality, DOAH comprises two distinct programs: the adjudication of administrative disputes by administrative law judges (ALJs) (the APA side) and the adjudication of workers' compensation disputes by judges of compensation claims (JCCs). The Administration Commission (Governor and Cabinet) appoints the Director of the Division who also serves as Chief Judge. Robert S. Cohen has served as Chief Judge since 2003. Chief Judge Cohen appoints the Deputy Chief Judge, the ALJs, and the Clerk of the Division. The Deputy Chief Judge for Compensation Claims and all of the JCCs are nominated by a judicial nominating commission and appointed by the Governor.

On the APA side, there are currently 33 ALJs, including Chief Judge Cohen and Deputy Chief Judge Maloney. Most of the ALJs are assigned to three geographical districts: the Northern District (Li Nelson, Scott Boyd, Diane Cleavinger, Gary Early, Bruce McKibben, June McKinney, Pete Peterson, Barbara Staros, Larry Stevenson, Suzanne Van Wyk, and Dave Watkins); the Middle District (Larry Johnston, Linzie Bogan, Thomas Crapps, Elizabeth McArthur, John Newton, Joyous Parrish, William Quattlebaum, and Lynne Quimby-Pennock); and the Southern District (John Van Laningham, Claude Arrington, Edward Bauer, Mary Li Creasy, Robert Meale, Todd Resavage, Darren Schwartz, Cathy Sellers, and Jessica Varn). In addition, Don Alexander and Bram Canter handle many of the environmental cases and Susan Kirkland handles all of the cases involving NICA claims.

On the JCC side, there are 17 district

offices throughout the state, with 32 JCCs. The Deputy Chief Judge for the JCCs is David Langham. Located within the JCC district offices are the video hearing rooms used by the ALJs for many of DOAH's hearings, and the ALJs are very grateful for the support they receive from the staff in these offices.

Both programs use an e-filing system for the filing of documents, and as of July 2011, section 120.52(5), Florida Statutes, requires attorneys to be e-filers. Registration for e-filing is simple and may be accomplished through the eALJ Electronic Filing link or the eJCC Electronic Filing link on the bureaus' respective websites.

Agency websites:

<http://www.jcc.state.fl.us>

<https://www.doah.state.fl.us>

Head of the Agency:

Robert S. Cohen, Director and Chief Judge

The DeSoto Building
1230 Apalachee Parkway
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3060
850-488-9675

Agency Clerk:

Claudia Llado
The DeSoto Building
1230 Apalachee Parkway
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3060
850-488-9675

Public Records Requests

Public records requests can be directed to Claudia Llado, Agency Clerk, or documents from the official records dockets may be reproduced by downloading documents from the official dockets available on the ALJ and JCC websites.

Hours of Operation:

Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Types of Cases:

ALJs hear a wide variety of cases where there is intended agency action where there is a dispute of material fact. Those cases where the ALJ has recommended order authority include cases for the Florida Commission on Human Relations involving allegations of discrimination; professional license applications and disciplinary proceedings; automobile franchises; certificates of need, exemptions from employment disqualification; health care facility regulation; environmental permitting; bid protests, and many others. In addition, DOAH has final order authority over cases such as those involving attorney's fees awards; rule challenges; continued involuntary commitment (Baker Act) hearings; child support enforcement; exceptional education; medical malpractice arbitration; and NICA proceedings.

JCCs hear cases where there is a dispute over workers' compensation benefits.

Agency Snapshots continued...

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