



**WEST VIRGINIA
SECRETARY OF STATE**

NATALIE E. TENNANT

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW DIVISION

eFILED

8/1/2014 2:08:29 PM

OFFICE OF
WEST VIRGINIA SECRETARY OF STATE

**FORM 5 -- NOTICE OF AGENCY ADOPTION OF A PROCEDURAL OR INTERPRETIVE RULE OR
A LEGISLATIVE RULE EXEMPT FROM LEGISLATIVE REVIEW**

AGENCY Secretary Of State

RULE TYPE Procedural AMENDMENT TO EXISTING RULE No TITLE-SERIES 153-

RULE NAME Administrative Hearings for Notaries Public 47

CITE AUTHORITY 39-4-25, 29A-5-1, et seq.

RULE IS LEGISLATIVE EXEMPT

No

CITE STATUTE(S) GRANTING EXEMPTION FROM LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

N/A

THE ABOVE RULE IS HEREBY ADOPTED AND FILED WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE. THE
EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS RULE IS

Friday, August 01, 2014

BY CHOOSING 'YES', I ATTEST THAT THE PREVIOUS STATEMENTS ARE TRUE AND CORRECT.

Yes

Sheryl Webb -- By my signature, I certify that I am the person authorized to file legislative rules, in
accordance with West Virginia Code §29A-3-11 and §39A-3-2.



Title-Series: 153-47



Rule Id: 9440



Document: 26106

TITLE 153
PROCEDURAL RULE
SECRETARY OF STATE

SERIES 47
ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS FOR NOTARIES PUBLIC

§153-47-1. General.

1.1. Scope. -- These rules provide the procedures for administrative hearings for the purpose of conditioning, suspension or revocation of a commission of a notary public or the registration of an electronic notary public by the Secretary of State.

1.2. Authority. -- W. Va. Code §§39-4-25 and 29A-5-1, *et seq.*

1.3. Filing Date. – August 1, 2014

1.4. Effective Date. -- August 1, 2014

§153-47-2. Definitions.

1.1. “Commission” means the authority granted by the Secretary of State to an individual for the purpose of performing notarial acts as defined in W.Va. State Code §39-4-2(5).

1.2. “Registration” means the authority granted by the Secretary of State to an individual for the purpose of performing electronic notarial acts as set forth in W.Va. State Code §39-4-19.

§153-47-3. Request For Hearing Following Denial, Conditioning, or Suspension of Commission.

3.1. Any individual denied a commission as a notary public or registration as an electronic notary public may request a hearing.

3.2. An individual whose commission or registration has been conditioned or suspended may request a hearing.

3.3. The request shall be in writing and shall specify the reasons for the request and the relief sought.

3.4. Requests for a hearing following denial, conditioning, or suspension of a commission or registration must be received by the Secretary of State within fifteen (15) days from the date the applicant receives the denial letter as indicated by the return receipt.

3.5. The Secretary of State may deny a hearing under this section if the request is received after the fifteen (15) day period.

3.6. Receipt of a request for a hearing by the Secretary of State shall begin the hearing process.

3.7. The requested hearing shall be held within forty-five (45) days from the receipt of the request by the Secretary of State.

3.8. A notice of the hearing shall be served upon the party requesting the hearing at least thirty (30) days prior to the hearing and shall be delivered return receipt by USPS certified mail.

§153-47-4. Reapplication Following Denial of Commission.

4.1. The Secretary of State shall not accept any reapplication from any applicant who has been denied a commission or registration until one (1) year has passed from the date of the denial of commission or registration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate or document corrections or compliance with the conditions or terms which caused the denial.

4.2. If an applicant reapplies for a commission or registration within one (1) year from the date of the denial and does not demonstrate or document such corrections or compliance, then the applicant shall not be entitled to a hearing on the Secretary of State's refusal to accept the reapplication.

§153-47-5. Required Hearings Prior To Revocation; Notice.

5.1. Prior to any revocation, the Secretary of State shall notify the person affected of the intent to revoke the commission or registration, or both.

5.2. The notice shall contain a short, plain statement of the matters asserted; the date, time and place of hearing and a statement of intention to appoint a hearing examiner, if one is to be appointed pursuant to Section 10 of these rules.

5.3. Notice shall be received by the party affected at least thirty (30) days prior to the hearing and shall be delivered return receipt requested by USPS certified mail.

5.4. The hearing shall be held within forty-five (45) days of the receipt of the notice by the party affected, as indicated by the return receipt requested.

5.5. Failure to appear, unless granted a continuance, on the date and at the time of the hearing considered a default and a conditioning, suspension, or revocation shall be entered and put into effect.

§153-47-6. Conduct Of Hearings.

6.1. Any party shall have the right to be represented by an attorney-at-law, duly qualified to practice in the State of West Virginia.

6.2. The Secretary of State may be represented by the office of the Attorney General.

6.3. The rules of evidence as applied in civil cases in the circuit court of this State shall be followed.

6.4. When necessary to ascertain facts not reasonably susceptible to proof under said rules of evidence, evidence not admissible thereunder shall be admitted, except where precluded by statute, if it is of a type commonly relied upon by reasonably prudent men in the conduct of their affairs.

6.5. The agency shall be bound by the rules of privilege recognized by law.

6.6. Documentary evidence may be received in the form of copies or excerpts or by incorporation of

reference.

6.7. Initially the agency shall be given opportunity to present evidence, including testimony, papers, records, agency staff memoranda and documents in the possession of the agency in support of its position.

6.8. Every party shall have the right of cross-examination of witnesses who testify, and following the conclusion of the agency's presentation, shall have the right to submit rebuttal evidence.

6.9. The Secretary of State shall have the right to cross-examine witnesses providing rebuttal testimony.

6.10. Following the presentation of all the evidence, every party, including the Secretary of State, shall have the right to offer argument, not to exceed a reasonable time limit as determined by the Secretary or the hearing examiner.

§153-47-7. Continuation Or Delay Of Hearing.

7.1. Hearings may be continued or delayed by request of any party to the Secretary of State or at the request of the Secretary of State.

7.2. Each party, including the Secretary of State, shall be permitted only one (1) motion to continue or delay a hearing.

7.3. Any continuance or delay shall not exceed thirty (30) days from the last scheduled date of the hearing.

7.4. A motion to continue or delay must be received by all parties affected at least two (2) days prior to the date of the hearing that is to be continued or delayed. Any motion to continue that does not meet this standard will be disregarded.

§153-47-8. Transcription Of Reported Testimony And Evidence.

8.1. Content of Transcript. -- All testimony, evidence, arguments and rulings on the admissibility of testimony and evidence shall be reported by stenographic notes and characters or by mechanical means.

8.2. Request from any party. -- Upon the request to the Secretary from any party to the hearing, all reported materials shall be transcribed and a copy thereof furnished to such party at the requesting party's expense.

8.3. Transcription in the event a hearing examiner is appointed. -- In all cases where a hearing examiner is appointed, all reported material shall be transcribed and forwarded to the Secretary. Any parties requesting a copy of a transcript prepared pursuant to this subsection shall be furnished a copy at their expense.

8.4. Responsibility for transcript. -- The Secretary shall have the responsibility for making arrangements for the transcription of the reported testimony and evidence. In the event transcription is required pursuant to this section it shall be accomplished with all dispatch.

8.5. Correction of error in transcript. -- Upon the motion of the Secretary of any party assigning

error or omission in any part of any transcript, the Secretary or his duly appointed hearing examiner shall settle all differences arising as to whether such transcript truly discloses what occurred at the hearing and shall direct that the transcript be corrected and revised in the respects designated, so as to make it conform to the whole truth.

§153-47-9. Submission Of Proposed Findings Of Fact And Conclusions Of Law; Time For Submission.

Any party may submit to the Secretary proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law within thirty (30) days of the conclusion of a hearing or, in the event the proceedings of a hearing are transcribed, within twenty (20) days from the date the final transcript is available.

§153-47-10. Appointment Of Hearing Examiner; Function Of Hearing Examiner.

The Secretary may, in his or her discretion, appoint a hearing examiner who shall be empowered to subpoena witnesses and documents, administer oaths and affirmations, to examine witnesses under oath, to rule on evidentiary questions, to hold conferences for the settlement or simplification of issues by consent of the parties and to otherwise conduct hearings as provided in Section 6 of these rules.

§153-47-11. Conferences; Informal Disposition Of Cases.

At any time prior to the hearing or thereafter, the Secretary or his or her duly appointed hearing examiner may hold conferences:

- (a) To dispose of procedural request or similar matters;
- (b) To simplify or settle issues by consent of the parties; or
- (c) To provide for the informal disposition of cases by stipulation, agreed settlement or consent order.

The Secretary or his or her duly appointed hearing examiner may cause such conferences to be held on his or her own motion or by the request of a party.

§153-47-12. Depositions Permitted.

Evidentiary depositions may be taken and read into evidence as in civil actions in the circuit courts of this State.

§153-47-13. Subpoenas.

13.1. Where permitted. -- The Secretary or his or her duly appointed hearing examiner shall have the power to issue subpoenas or subpoenas duces tecum pursuant to the provisions set forth in W. Va. Code §29A-5-1b.

13.2. Time for requesting the issuance of subpoenas. -- Written requests for the issuance of subpoenas or subpoenas duces tecum as provided in Subsection 13.1 of this section shall be made no later than ten (10) days prior to a scheduled hearing.

§153-47-14. Orders; Content.

Every final order entered by the Secretary, following a hearing conducted pursuant to these rules, shall be made pursuant to the provisions of W. Va. Code §29A-5-3. Such orders shall be entered within forty-five (45) days following the submission of all documents and materials necessary for the proper disposition of the case, including transcripts and proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law.

§153-47-15. Appeal.

An appeal from any final order or ruling entered in accordance with these regulations shall be in accordance with the provisions of W. Va. Code §29A-5-4.

§153-47-16. Severability.

If any provision of these rules or the application thereof to any person or circumstance shall be held invalid, such invalidity thereof shall not affect the provision or application of these regulations which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application and to this end the provisions of these regulations are declared to be severable.