

IMPARTIAL HEARING OFFICER APPOINTMENT AND COMPENSATION 4321.4

The Board of Education establishes the following policy to govern the appointment and compensation of impartial hearing officers for special education related impartial hearings pursuant to Part 200 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education.

APPOINTMENT

The updated list of certified IHOs for this county promulgated by the New York State Education Department will be used in connection with requests for impartial hearings. The list shall include the names of those other certified IHOs whose names appear on the state list and who have indicated to the district their interest in serving as an IHO in the district.

Upon receipt of a request for an impartial hearing, the Board President, or on the occasion of his/her absence or inability, the Vice President, shall appoint an impartial hearing officer from the district's alphabetical rotational list previously adopted by the Board.

The District Clerk or other person so designated, under the direction of the Board President, shall initiate the selection process by contacting the impartial hearing officer whose name first appears after the impartial hearing officer who last served. The District Clerk or designee shall canvass the list in alphabetical order as prescribed by the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education until an appointment is accepted.

Upon receipt of a request for an impartial hearing, the rotational selection process for the IHO shall be initiated immediately and always within two (2) business days after receipt of the district of such written request. Should an IHO decline appointment, or if within 24 hours the IHO fails to respond or is unreachable after reasonable efforts by the District Clerk or designee, such efforts will be documented through independently verifiable efforts. The district representative shall then proceed through the list to determine availability of the next successive IHO.

If the IHO is unable to initiate the hearing within the first 14 days of being appointed by the school district, the IHO cannot accept the appointment. The District Clerk shall then proceed through such list to determine availability of the next successive IHO.

Records relating to the IHO process including, but not limited to, the request for initiation and completion of each impartial hearing will be maintained by the district and such information will be reported to the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities of SED as required by Commissioner's regulations.

The district shall compensate an impartial hearing officer for his or her services at the maximum rate established for such purpose by the Director of the Division of the Budget. Currently, this rate is \$100 per hour for pre-hearing, hearing, and post-hearing activities. In addition, impartial hearing officers may be reimbursed for reasonable, actual and necessary expenses for automobile travel, meals, and overnight lodging in accordance with the current district reimbursement rate set for district employees. Mailing costs associated with the hearing will also be reimbursed.

The district shall annually notify each impartial hearing officer of this policy and of the current rates set by the district for travel reimbursement, overnight lodging, meal expenses and mailing costs.