

to the Director. Such communication shall include the designation of a time and place for a departmental hearing before the Director, which shall in no event be less than twenty (20) days from the date of the mailing of such order. If, at such time and place, no one appears on behalf of the association, the order shall become final and conclusive on all parties.

(c) *Departmental Hearing.* If, upon receipt of a communication provided for in sub-section (b) hereof, the recipient thereof desires to be heard, the Director shall conduct a departmental hearing. If, after such hearing, the Director shall issue an order relative to the subject matter thereof, such order shall be mailed, registered mail, return receipt requested, to the association affected thereby, as provided in sub-section (b) hereof. Such order shall be final but subject to appeal under the provisions of sub-section (d) hereof.

(d) *Appeal from final order.* If, after departmental hearing, the Director issues a final order relative to the subject matter of such hearing, as provided in sub-section (c) hereof, the association affected or the holders of at least ten per cent (10%) of the par value of the free shares of said association shall have the right, within thirty (30) days of the date of mailing of such order, to appeal from such order by filing a petition in the Circuit Court of Baltimore City or in the circuit court for the county in which the principal Maryland office of the association is located. Such petition for appeal shall set forth the action appealed from and the basis for the appeal; copies of the petition shall be served upon the Director and all other parties of record.

(e) *Judicial review.* The court to which the appeal is taken shall hear the matter de novo, without a jury, and the parties may call such witnesses and introduce such evidence as may be proper in the premises. The court may affirm, reverse, or modify the order appealed from, or remand the case to the Department for further proceedings as may be required. An appeal may be taken from the decision of the court hearing said appeal to the Court of Appeals of Maryland by any party to the proceedings in the same manner as other appeals are taken from decrees or orders of courts.

(f) *Stay.* No appeal shall stay the operation of any final order of the Director unless ordered by the court in which the appeal is pending and upon such terms and conditions as the court may prescribe.

160-I. EXAMINERS AND HEARING OFFICERS.

(a) *Designation.* The Director may designate, from personnel now or hereafter employed in the State service and assigned to the Department, such examiners and hearing officers as may be necessary for the administration of this sub-title and provided for in the budget. The designation of all examiners and hearing officers shall be from the classified service of the State of Maryland, and in accordance with the rules and practice of the merit system.

(b) *Disqualification.* Such examiners and hearing officers shall not be officers, directors, attorneys, employees or agents of, or in any manner interested in, any association, except that they may be holders of free share accounts.