WEST VIRGINIA CODE CHAPTER 29a ARTICLE 4

WV Legislature

§29A-4-1. Declaratory rulings by agencies.

On petition of any interested person, an agency may issue a declaratory ruling with respect to the applicability to any person, property or state of facts of any rule or statute enforceable by it. A declaratory ruling, if issued after argument and stated to be binding, is binding between the agency and the petitioner on the state of facts alleged, unless it is altered or set aside by a court, but it shall not be binding on any other person. Such ruling is subject to review before the court and in the manner hereinafter provided for the review of orders or decisions in contested cases. Each agency may prescribe by rule the form for such petitions and the procedure for their submission, consideration and disposition.

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§29A-4-2. Declaratory judgment on validity of rule.

(a) Any person, except the agency promulgating the rule, may have the validity of any rule determined by instituting an action for a declaratory judgment in the circuit court of Kanawha county, West Virginia, when it appears that the rule, or its threatened application, interferes with or impairs or threatens to interfere with or impair, the legal rights or privileges of the plaintiff or plaintiffs. The agency shall be made a party to the proceeding. The declaratory judgment may be rendered whether or not the plaintiff or plaintiffs has or have first requested the agency to pass upon the validity of the rule in question.

(b) The court shall declare the rule invalid if it finds that the rule violates Constitutional provisions or exceeds the statutory authority or jurisdiction of the agency or was adopted without compliance with statutory rule-making procedures or is arbitrary or capricious, or that, in the case of a rule adopted pursuant to section five, article three of this chapter, action under said section five was not justified.

(c) When the invalidity of a rule has been so declared, the agency shall, within thirty days after such declaratory judgment has been entered, acquiesce therein and modify or rescind such invalidated rule in accord with the requirement of such declaratory judgment unless the agency promptly, and in any event within such thirty-day period, notifies the plaintiff or plaintiffs of its intention to apply for an appeal to the Supreme Court of Appeals from such declaratory judgment pursuant to section one, article six of this chapter. In the event such agency shall thereafter make timely application for such appeal, the acquiescence of the agency in the invalidity of such rule shall not be required until thirty days after timely applications for such appeal have been refused or within thirty days after the appeal has been dismissed or otherwise disposed of in the Supreme Court of Appeals by an affirmance of the judgment invalidating said rule.

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