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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
BEFORE THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

In re: )  
 ) Docket No. **16-0181**  
 Johnny Hughes, also )  
 known as Johnny Hughe )  
 ) **Dismissal (With Prejudice)**  
 Petitioner )

Appearances:

Mr. Corey Lea, representative for Petitioner Johnny Hughes, also known as Johnny Hughe, and

Mr. Juan Carlos Alarcon, Esq. with the Office of the General Counsel, Civil Rights Litigation Division, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington D.C.

The "Request for a Formal Hearing before the Administrative Law Judge" ("the Request" or "the Petition"), filed September 15, 2016, is before me. Petitioner Johnny Hughes is also known as Johnny Hughe (probably due to a mis-spelling of his name in the case caption of the Request). The Request is submitted by Corey Lea, Representative for Petitioner, who indicates on p. 3 of the Request that Johnny Hughes is deceased and who provides Monica Frazier's address.

I have carefully reviewed the Petition and the Agency Response filed October 6, 2016, a copy of which is attached.

I conclude that Administrative Law Judges have no authority to grant the relief requested, as stated in the Agency Response. Consequently, the case of Johnny Hughes, also known as Johnny Hughe, Petitioner, is DISMISSED (With Prejudice).

Copies of this Dismissal (With Prejudice) order shall be served by the Hearing Clerk upon each of the parties.

Done at Washington, D.C.  
this 14<sup>th</sup> day of October 2016



Jill S. Clifton  
Administrative Law Judge

Hearing Clerk's Office  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Stop 9203 South Building Room 1031  
1400 Independence Ave SW  
Washington, DC 20250-9203  
202-720-4443  
FAX 202-720-9776  
[OALJHearingClerks@ocio.usda.gov](mailto:OALJHearingClerks@ocio.usda.gov)

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JOHNNY HUGHE  
Petitioner

Docket No. 16-0181

**Agency Response**

On or around September 15, 2016, Petitioner Johnny Hughe ("Petitioner") filed a Request for a Formal Hearing with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Administrative Law Judges ("OALJ"). On September 19, 2016, OALJ issued a notice to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights ("Agency") requesting a response within 20 days. The Agency timely files this response.

Petitioner requests a hearing to be held at a federal courthouse pursuant to 7 C.F.R. part 15f ("Section 741").<sup>1</sup> See Petitioner's Request.

**Petitioner failed to identify valid legal authority and jurisdiction for this action**

Under 7 C.F.R. § 1.131, there are nearly fifty statutes which expressly afford an individual a hearing before an Administrative Law Judge. None of them apply to Petitioner's request. See 7 C.F.R. § 1.131. As no action may be brought unless authorized, jurisdiction cannot be assumed absent express statutory or regulatory grant. See *Reid v. United States*, 211 U.S. 529, 538 (1909); *Munro v. United States*, 303 U.S. 36, 41 (1938); *United States v. Sherwood*, 312 U.S. 584, 290 (1941); *United States v. Testan*, 424 U.S. 392, 399 (1976); and *Hercules, Inc. v. United States*, 516 U.S. 417, 422 (1996). Petitioner has not identified a statutory jurisdictional basis which would entitle her to a hearing before the OALJ.

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<sup>1</sup> Petitioner also refers to the *Pigford* Remedy Act of 2007, Section 14012 of the Food Energy and Conservation Act, the Administrative Procedures Act, and the Pigford Consent Decree. None of the aforementioned has any relevance whatsoever to OALJ's jurisdiction to hear these allegations of discrimination.

Petitioner's citations of "Section 741" and the Equal Credit Opportunity Act ("ECOA") do not establish a statutory jurisdictional basis for this request. *See* 7 C.F.R. § 15(f) ("Section 741"). 7 C.F.R. Part 15f applies to complaints of discrimination filed with USDA prior to July 1, 1997, alleging discriminatory acts from 1981 to 1997. The period for filing a Section 741 complaint request under the authorized waiver of the ECOA Statute of Limitations expired on October 21, 2000. 7 C.F.R Part 15f ("you have until October 21, 2000 to file your Section 741 complaint"). USDA no longer has authority under the terms of the statutory waiver to accept Section 741 complaint requests, unless such a complaint has already been docketed under part 15f by USDA or a request was filed with USDA prior to October 21, 2000. 7 C.F.R § 15f.5 is clear that Section 741 complaint requests filed under part 15f are no longer accepted by USDA. *See generally* 68 Fed. Reg. 7411 (February 14, 2003).

As Petitioner fails to assert cognizable jurisdiction for OALJ to hear this action, the request should be dismissed with prejudice.

Date: October 6, 2016

Respectfully submitted,



J. CARLOS ALARCON, Esq.  
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U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the General Counsel  
Civil Rights, Labor and Employment Law  
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**AGENCY'S NOTICE OF APPEARANCE**

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that Juan Carlos Alarcon, United States Department of Agriculture, Office of the General Counsel, Civil Rights Employment and Labor Litigation Division, hereby enters his appearance as counsel of record for the Agency in the above-captioned matter. The Clerk and all parties are requested to address all papers served on the Agency as follows:

Juan Carlos Alarcon  
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Office of General Counsel, Civil Rights Employment and Labor Litigation Division  
Room 3312-S  
Washington, DC 20250  
202-690-2163  
Juan.alarcon@ogc.usda.gov

Date: October 6, 2016

Respectfully submitted,

  
J CARLOS ALARCON, Esq.  
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