**Section 9020.50 Hearing: Place; Change of Venue**

a) Except to the extent modified by Section 9020.80 in reference to proceedings under Section 19(b-1) of the Workers' Compensation Act [820 ILCS 305/19(b-1)] (Act), the provisions of subsection (b) apply:

b) Upon receipt of an Application for Adjustment of Claim, the Commission will fix a date and place for initial status before an Arbitrator of the Commission in accordance with the applicable Act. The place designated shall be a hearing site located in or nearest geographically to the vicinity in which the alleged accident or exposure occurred. However, the Commission may assign a different Arbitrator to balance Arbitrator caseloads at each hearing site. When the accident occurs outside the State of Illinois and the applicant resides in Illinois, the case shall be set at the hearing site geographically nearest to where the applicant resides. When the accident occurred outside of Illinois and the applicant resides outside of Illinois, the case shall be set at a hearing site most convenient to the parties.

c) Designation of a hearing site other than as provided in this subsection may be had upon showing to the Commission of extreme hardship worked upon a party or parties by the designated site, or by agreement of the parties. Absent agreement, any party seeking a change of venue may present a Motion for Change of Venue, setting forth the basis for the change.

(Source: Amended at 40 Ill. Reg. 15709, effective November 9, 2016)