

216.16 Sixty-day administrative release.

1. A person claiming to be aggrieved by an unfair or discriminatory practice must initially seek an administrative relief by filing a complaint with the agency in accordance with [section 216.15](#). This provision also applies to persons claiming to be aggrieved by an unfair or discriminatory practice committed by the state or an agency or political subdivision of the state, notwithstanding the terms of the Iowa administrative procedure Act, [chapter 17A](#).

2. After the proper filing of a complaint with the agency, a complainant may subsequently commence an action for relief in the district court if all of the following conditions have been satisfied:

a. The complainant has timely filed the complaint with the agency as provided in [section 216.15, subsection 13](#).

b. The complaint has been on file with the agency for at least sixty days and the agency has issued a release to the complainant pursuant to [subsection 3](#).

3. a. Upon a request by the complainant, and after the expiration of sixty days from the timely filing of a complaint with the agency, the agency shall issue to the complainant a release stating that the complainant has a right to commence an action in the district court. A release under [this subsection](#) shall not be issued if any of the following apply:

(1) A finding of no probable cause has been made on the complaint by the administrative law judge charged with that duty under [section 216.15, subsection 3](#).

(2) A conciliation agreement has been executed under [section 216.15](#).

(3) The agency has served notice of hearing upon the respondent pursuant to [section 216.15, subsection 6](#).

(4) The complaint is closed as an administrative closure and two years have elapsed since the issuance date of the closure.

b. Notwithstanding [section 216.15, subsection 5](#), a party may obtain a copy of all documents contained in a case file where the agency has issued a release to the complainant pursuant to [this subsection](#).

4. An action authorized under [this section](#) is barred unless commenced within ninety days after issuance by the agency of a release under [subsection 3](#). If a complainant obtains a release from the agency under [subsection 3](#), the agency is barred from further action on that complaint.

5. Venue for an action under [this section](#) shall be in the county in which the respondent resides or has its principal place of business, or in the county in which the alleged unfair or discriminatory practice occurred.

6. The district court may grant any relief in an action under [this section](#) which is authorized by [section 216.15, subsection 9](#), to be issued by the agency. The district court may also award the respondent reasonable attorney fees and court costs when the court finds that the complainant's action was frivolous.

7. It is the legislative intent of [this chapter](#) that every complaint be at least preliminarily screened during the first one hundred twenty days.

8. [This section](#) does not authorize administrative closures if an investigation is warranted.

[C79, 81, §601A.16]

84 Acts, ch 1096, §2; 85 Acts, ch 197, §10; 86 Acts, ch 1245, §263; 88 Acts, ch 1109, §29; 90 Acts, ch 1040, §1, 2

C93, §216.16

2003 Acts, ch 44, §114; 2009 Acts, ch 41, §221; 2009 Acts, ch 133, §83; 2024 Acts, ch 1170, §263

Referred to in [§216.15](#), [216.15A](#), [216.19](#)

For provision governing conflicts between this section and [section 216.16A](#), see [§216.15A, subsection 13](#)