

CHAPTER 1
RULES OF PRACTICE

[Prior to 1/13/88, see Civil Rights 240—1.2, Ch 9, Ch 10]

Chapter rescission date pursuant to Iowa Code section 17A.7: 1/1/28

161—1.1(216) Organization and administration.

1.1(1) Organization.

a. Commission. The Iowa civil rights commission is a seven-member body. Members are appointed by the governor pursuant to Iowa Code section 216.3.

b. Location. The Iowa civil rights commission, hereinafter referred to as “commission,” is located on the First Floor, Grimes State Office Building, 400 E. 14th Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-1004; telephone (515)281-4121; toll-free in Iowa only 1-800-457-4416; facsimile transmission (fax) (515)242-5840. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, or the business hours set by the office of the governor or otherwise established by the legislature.

1.1(2) Administration. The executive director is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the commission’s activities.

1.1(3) Electronic attendance of commissioners.

a. Notification. A commissioner wishing to attend the commission meeting by electronic means shall notify the executive director of this intent. The executive director will then take all reasonable measures to ensure that the necessary equipment is available at the site selected for the commission meeting. The commissioner attending by electronic means is responsible for ensuring that adequate equipment is available at the commissioner’s location.

b. Public participation. Whenever any commissioners attend by electronic means, public access to the conversation of the commission will be allowed at the location of at least one of the commissioners. Unless good cause requires otherwise, the location where public access to the conversation is provided shall be a location reasonably accessible to the public. If the location is not reasonably accessible to the public, the nature of the good cause justifying inaccessibility shall be stated in the minutes.

c. Electronic attendance of multiple commissioners. If at the time a commissioner notifies the executive director of the intent to attend electronically that commissioner’s electronic attendance would mean that four or more commissioners would be attending separately via electronic means, then that commissioner may not attend by electronic means unless the in-person attendance of any four of the commissioners attending the meeting at any of the available meeting sites is impossible or impracticable.

d. Conducting electronic meeting. Whenever four or more commissioners are separately attending a commission meeting by electronic means, the commission shall conduct the meeting in accordance with the following requirements:

(1) The commission shall keep detailed minutes of all discussion, all persons present and all action. The commission shall electronically record all proceedings in the meeting and retain such recordings for no less than one year from the date of the meeting.

(2) The minutes of the meeting shall include a statement explaining why a meeting in person was impossible or impracticable.

(3) The public notice of the meeting shall state the location of the meeting to be the location where public access to the conversation is provided.

[ARC 8749B, IAB 5/5/10, effective 6/9/10; Editorial change: IAC Supplement 7/23/25]

161—1.2(216) Commission procedure for rule making.

1.2(1) Initiation of rule-making procedures.

a. Any person or state agency may file a petition for rule making with the commission at its location as defined in 161—paragraph 1.1(1)“b.” A petition is deemed filed when it is received by that office. The commission shall provide the petitioner with a file-stamped copy of the petition if the petitioner provides the commission an extra copy for this purpose. The petition must be typewritten or legibly handwritten in ink and must substantially conform to the following form:

BEFORE THE IOWA CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

Petition by (Name of Petitioner)
for the (adoption, amendment, or repeal)
of rules relating to (state subject matter).



PETITION FOR
RULE MAKING

The petition must provide the following information:

1. A statement of the specific rule-making action sought by the petitioner including the text or a summary of the contents of the proposed rule or amendment to a rule, a citation and the relevant language to the particular portion or portions of the rule proposed to be amended or repealed.
2. A citation to any law deemed relevant to the commission's authority to take the action urged or to the desirability of that action.
3. A brief summary of petitioner's arguments in support of the action urged in the petition.
4. A brief summary of any data supporting the action urged in the petition.
5. The names and addresses of other persons, or a description of any class of persons, known by petitioner to be affected by, or interested in, the proposed action which is the subject of the petition.
 - b. The commission shall act upon the request within 60 days after its submission in accordance with Iowa Code section 17A.7 as amended by 1998 Iowa Acts, chapter 1202.
 - c. The commission may initiate rule-making procedures upon its own motion in accordance with Iowa Code section 17A.4.

1.2(2) *Advice on possible rules before notice of proposed rule adoption.* In addition to seeking information by other methods, the commission may, before publication of a Notice of Intended Action under Iowa Code section 17A.4(1) "a," solicit comments from the public on a subject matter of possible rule making by the commission by causing notice to be published in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin of the subject matter and indicating where, when, and how persons may comment.

1.2(3) *Notice of proposed rule making—contents.* At least 35 days before the adoption of a rule, the commission shall cause Notice of Intended Action to be published in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin. The Notice of Intended Action shall include:

- a. A brief explanation of the purpose of the proposed rule;
- b. The specific legal authority for the proposed rule;
- c. Except to the extent impracticable, the text of the proposed rule;
- d. Where, when, and how persons may present their views on the proposed rule; and
- e. Where, when, and how persons may demand an oral proceeding on the proposed rule if the notice does not already provide for one.

Where inclusion of the complete text of a proposed rule in the Notice of Intended Action is impracticable, the commission shall include in the notice a statement fully describing the specific subject matter of the omitted portion of the text of the proposed rule, the specific issues to be addressed by that omitted text of the proposed rule, and the range of possible choices being considered by the agency for the resolution of each of those issues.

1.2(4) *Public participation.*

a. *Written comments.* For at least 20 days after publication of the Notice of Intended Action, persons may submit argument, data, and views, in writing on the proposed rule. Such written submissions should identify the proposed rule to which they relate and should be submitted to the commission at its location as defined in 161—paragraph 1.1(1) "b," or the person designated in the Notice of Intended Action.

b. *Oral proceedings.* The commission may, at any time, schedule an oral proceeding on a proposed rule. The commission shall schedule an oral proceeding on a proposed rule if, within 20 days after a published Notice of Intended Action, a written request for an opportunity to make oral presentations is submitted to the commission by the administrative rules review committee, a governmental subdivision, an agency, an association having not less than 25 members, or at least 25 persons. That request must also contain the following additional information:

- (1) A request by one or more individual persons must be signed by each of them and include the address and telephone number of each of them.

(2) A request by an association must be signed by an officer or designee of the association and must contain a statement that the association has at least 25 members and the address and telephone number of the person signing the request.

(3) A request by an agency or governmental subdivision must be signed by an official having authority to act on behalf of the entity and must contain the address and telephone number of the person signing the request.

c. Conduct of oral proceedings.

(1) Applicability. This paragraph applies only to those oral rule-making proceedings in which an opportunity to make oral presentations is authorized or required by Iowa Code section 17A.4(1) "b" as amended by 1998 Iowa Acts, chapter 1202, or paragraph 1.2(5) "f."

(2) Scheduling and notice. An oral proceeding on a proposed rule may be held in one or more locations and shall not be held earlier than 20 days after notice of its location and time is published in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin. That notice shall also identify the proposed rule by ARC number and citation to the Iowa Administrative Bulletin.

(3) Presiding officer. The commission, a member of the commission, or another person designated by the commission who will be familiar with the substance of the proposed rule, shall preside at the oral proceeding on a proposed rule. If the commission does not preside, the presiding officer shall prepare a memorandum for consideration by the commission summarizing the contents of the presentations made at the oral proceeding unless the commission determines that such a memorandum is unnecessary because the commission will personally listen to or read the entire transcript of the oral proceeding.

(4) Conduct of the proceeding. At an oral proceeding on a proposed rule persons may make oral statements and make documentary and physical submissions, which may include data, views, comments or arguments concerning the proposed rule. Persons wishing to make oral presentations at such a proceeding are encouraged to notify the commission at least one business day prior to the proceeding and indicate the general subject of their presentations. At the proceeding, those who participate shall indicate their names and addresses, identify any persons or organizations they may represent, and provide any other information relating to their participation deemed appropriate by the presiding officer. Oral proceedings shall be open to the public and shall be recorded by stenographic or electronic means.

1. At the beginning of the oral proceeding the presiding officer shall give a brief synopsis of the proposed rule, a statement of the statutory authority for the proposed rule, and the reasons for the commission decision to propose the rule. The presiding officer may place time limitations on individual oral presentations when necessary to ensure the orderly and expeditious conduct of the oral proceeding. To encourage joint oral presentations and to avoid repetition, additional time may be provided for persons whose presentations represent the views of other individuals as well as their own views.

2. Persons making oral presentations are encouraged to avoid restating matters which have already been submitted in writing.

3. To facilitate the exchange of information the presiding officer may, where time permits, open the floor to questions or general discussion.

4. The presiding officer shall have the authority to take any reasonable action necessary for the orderly conduct of the meeting.

5. Physical and documentary submissions presented by participants in the oral proceeding shall be submitted to the presiding officer. Such submissions become the property of the commission.

6. The oral proceeding may be continued by the presiding officer to a later time without notice other than by announcement at the hearing.

7. Participants in an oral proceeding shall not be required to take an oath or to submit to cross-examination. However, the presiding officer in an oral proceeding may question participants and permit the questions of participants about any matter relating to that rule-making proceeding, including any prior written submissions made by those participants in that proceeding; but no participant shall be required to answer any question.

8. The presiding officer in an oral proceeding may permit rebuttal statements and request the filing of written statements subsequent to adjournment of the oral presentations.

d. Additional information. In addition to receiving written comments and oral presentations on a proposed rule according to the provisions of this rule, the commission may obtain information concerning a proposed rule through any other lawful means deemed appropriate under the circumstances.

e. Accessibility. The commission shall schedule oral proceedings in rooms accessible to and functional for persons with physical disabilities. Persons who have special requirements should contact the commission at its location as defined in 161—paragraph 1.1(1)“b” in advance to arrange access or other needed services.

1.2(5) Regulatory analysis.

a. Definition of small business. A “small business” is defined in 1998 Iowa Acts, chapter 1202, section 10.

b. Qualified requesters for regulatory analysis—economic impact. The commission shall issue a regulatory analysis of a proposed rule that conforms to the requirements of Iowa Code section 17A.4(2a) after a proper request from:

- (1) The administrative rules coordinator;
- (2) The administrative rules review committee.

c. Qualified requesters for regulatory analysis—business impact. The commission shall issue a regulatory analysis of a proposed rule that conforms to the requirements of 1998 Iowa Acts, chapter 1202, section 10(2b) after a proper request from:

- (1) The administrative rules review committee,
- (2) The administrative rules coordinator,

(3) At least 25 or more persons who sign the request provided that each represents a different small business,

(4) An organization representing at least 25 small businesses. That organization shall list the name, address and phone number of not less than 25 small businesses it represents.

d. Time period for analysis. Upon receipt of a timely request for a regulatory analysis the commission shall adhere to the time lines described in 1998 Iowa Acts, chapter 1202, section 10(4).

e. Contents for request. A request for a regulatory analysis is made when it is mailed or delivered to the commission. The request shall be in writing and satisfy the requirements of 1998 Iowa Acts, chapter 1202, section 10(1).

f. Contents of concise summary. The contents of the concise summary shall conform to the requirements of 1998 Iowa Acts, chapter 1202, section 10(4,5).

g. Publication of a concise summary. The commission shall make available to the maximum extent feasible, copies of the published summary in conformance with 1998 Iowa Acts, chapter 1202, section 10(5).

h. Regulatory analysis contents—rules review committee or rules coordinator. When a regulatory analysis is issued in response to written request from the administrative rules review committee or the administrative rules coordinator, the regulatory analysis shall conform to the requirements of 1998 Iowa Acts, chapter 1202, section 10(2a), unless a written request expressly waives one or more of the items listed in the section.

i. Regulatory analysis contents—substantial impact on small business. When a regulatory analysis is issued in response to a written request from the administrative rules review committee, the administrative rules coordinator, at least 25 persons signing that request who each qualify as a small business or by an organization representing at least 25 small businesses, the regulatory analysis shall conform to the requirements of 1998 Iowa Acts, chapter 1202, section 10(2b).

1.2(6) Fiscal impact statement.

a. A proposed rule that mandates additional combined expenditures exceeding \$100,000 by all affected political subdivisions or agencies or entities which contract with the political subdivisions to provide service must be accompanied by a fiscal impact statement outlining the costs associated with the rule. A fiscal impact statement must satisfy the requirements of Iowa Code section 25B.6.

b. If the commission determines at the time it adopts a rule that a fiscal impact statement upon which the rule is based contains errors, the commission shall, at the same time, issue a corrected fiscal impact statement and publish the corrected fiscal impact statement in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin.

1.2(7) *Time and manner of rule adoption.*

a. Time of adoption. The commission shall not adopt a rule until the period for making written submissions and oral presentations has expired. Within 180 days after the later of the publication of the Notice of Intended Action, or the end of oral proceedings thereon, the commission shall adopt a rule pursuant to the rule-making proceeding or terminate the proceeding by publication of a notice to that effect in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin.

b. Consideration of public comment. Before the adoption of a rule, the commission shall consider fully all of the written submissions and oral submissions received in that rule-making proceeding or any memorandum summarizing such oral submissions, and any regulatory analysis or fiscal impact statement issued in that rule-making proceeding.

c. Reliance on commission expertise. Except as otherwise provided by law, the commission may use its own experience, technical competence, specialized knowledge, and judgment in the adoption of a rule.

1.2(8) *Variance between adopted rule and published notice of proposed rule adoption.*

a. The commission shall not adopt a rule that differs from the rule proposed in the Notice of Intended Action on which the rule is based unless:

(1) The differences are within the scope of the subject matter announced in the Notice of Intended Action and are in character with the issues raised in that notice; and

(2) The differences are a logical outgrowth of the contents of that Notice of Intended Action and the comments submitted in response thereto; and

(3) The Notice of Intended Action provided fair warning that the outcome of that rule-making proceeding could be the rule in question.

b. In determining whether the Notice of Intended Action provided fair warning that the outcome of that rule-making proceeding could be the rule in question the commission shall consider the following factors:

(1) The extent to which persons who will be affected by the rule should have understood that the rule-making proceeding on which it is based could affect their interests;

(2) The extent to which the subject matter of the rule or the issues determined by the rule are different from the subject matter or issues contained in the Notice of Intended Action; and

(3) The extent to which the effects of the rule differ from the effects of the proposed rule contained in the Notice of Intended Action.

c. The commission shall commence a rule-making proceeding within 60 days of receipt of a petition for rule making seeking the amendment or repeal of a rule that differs from the proposed rule contained in the Notice of Intended Action upon which the rule is based, unless the commission finds that the differences between the adopted rule and the proposed rule are so insubstantial as to make such a rule-making proceeding wholly unnecessary. A copy of any such finding and the petition to which it responds shall be sent to petitioner, the administrative rules coordinator, and the administrative rules review committee, within 3 days of its issuance.

d. Concurrent rule-making proceedings. Nothing in this rule disturbs the discretion of the commission to initiate, concurrently, several different rule-making proceedings on the same subject with several different published Notices of Intended Action.

1.2(9) *Concise statement of reasons.*

a. General. When requested by a person, either prior to the adoption of a rule or within 30 days after its publication in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin as an adopted rule, the commission shall issue a concise statement of reasons for the rule. Requests for such a statement must be in writing and be delivered to the commission's office as defined in 161—paragraph 1.1(1)“b.” The request should indicate whether the statement is sought for all or only a specified part of the rule. Requests will be considered made on the date received.

b. Contents. The concise statement of reasons shall contain:

(1) The reasons for adopting the rule;

(2) An indication of any change between the text of the proposed rule contained in the published Notice of Intended Action and the text of the rule as finally adopted, with the reasons for any such change;

(3) The principal reasons urged in the rule-making proceeding for and against the rule, and the commission's reasons for overruling the arguments made against the rule.

c. Time of issuance. After a proper request, the commission shall issue a concise statement of reasons by the time the rule is adopted or 35 days after receipt of the request, whichever is later.

1.2(10) *Contents, style, and form of rule.*

a. Contents. Each adopted rule by the commission shall contain the text of the rule and, in addition:

(1) The date the commission adopted the rule;

(2) A brief explanation of the principal reasons for the rule-making action if such reasons are required by Iowa Code section 17A.4(1) "b" as amended by 1998 Iowa Acts, chapter 1202, or the commission in its discretion decides to include such reasons;

(3) A reference to all rules repealed, amended, or suspended by the rule;

(4) A reference to the specific statutory or other authority authorizing adoption of the rule;

(5) Any findings required by any provision of law as a prerequisite to adoption or effectiveness of the rule;

(6) A brief explanation of the principal reasons for the failure to provide for waivers to the rule if no waiver provision is included and a brief explanation of any waiver or special exceptions provided in the rule if such reasons are required by Iowa Code section 17A.4(1) "b" as amended by 1998 Iowa Acts, chapter 1202, or the commission in its discretion decides to include such reasons; and

(7) The effective date of the rule.

b. References to materials not published in full. When the administrative code editor decides to omit the full text of a proposed or adopted rule because publication of the full text would be unduly cumbersome, expensive, or otherwise inexpedient, the commission shall prepare and submit to the administrative code editor for inclusion in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin and Iowa Administrative Code a summary statement describing the specific subject matter of the omitted material. This summary statement shall include the title and a brief description sufficient to inform the public of the specific nature and subject matter of the proposed or adopted rules, and of significant issues involved in these rules. The summary statement shall also describe how a copy of the full text of the proposed or adopted rule, including any unpublished matter, may be obtained from the commission. The commission will provide a copy of that full text at actual cost upon request and shall make copies of the full text available for review at the state law library and may make the standards available electronically.

At the request of the administrative code editor, the commission shall provide a proposed statement explaining why publication of the full text would be unduly cumbersome, expensive, or otherwise inexpedient.

c. Style and form. In preparing its rules, the commission shall follow the uniform numbering system, form, and style prescribed by the administrative rules coordinator.

1.2(11) *Filing of rules.* The commission shall file each rule it adopts in the office of the administrative rules coordinator. The filing must be executed as soon after adoption of the rule as is practicable. At the time of filing, each rule must have attached to it any fiscal impact statement and any concise statement of reasons that was issued with respect to that rule. If a fiscal impact statement or statement of reasons for that rule was not issued until a time subsequent to the filing of that rule, the note or statement must be attached to the filed rule within five working days after the note or statement is issued. In filing a rule, the agency shall use the standard form prescribed by the administrative rules coordinator.

1.2(12) *Effectiveness of rules prior to publication.*

a. Grounds. The commission may make a rule effective after its filing at any stated time prior to 35 days after its indexing and publication in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin if it finds that a statute so provides, the rule confers a benefit or removes a restriction on some segment of the public, or that the effective date of the rule is necessary to avoid imminent peril to the public health, safety, or welfare. The commission shall incorporate the required finding and a brief statement of its supporting reasons in each rule adopted in reliance upon this subrule.

b. Special notice. When the commission makes a rule effective prior to its indexing and publication in reliance upon the provisions of Iowa Code section 17A.5(2) "b"(3), the commission shall employ all reasonable efforts to make its contents known to the persons who may be affected by that rule prior to the

rule's indexing and publication. The term "all reasonable efforts" requires the commission to employ the most effective and prompt means of notice rationally calculated to inform potentially affected parties of the following: the effectiveness of the rule under the circumstances, the various alternatives available for this purpose, the comparative costs to the commission of utilizing each of those alternatives, and the harm suffered by affected persons from any lack of notice concerning the contents of the rule prior to its indexing and publication. The means that may be used for providing notice of such rules prior to their indexing and publication include, but are not limited to, any one or more of the following means: radio, newspaper, television, signs, mail, telephone, personal notice, or electronic means.

A rule made effective prior to its indexing and publication in reliance upon the provisions of Iowa Code section 17A.5(2) "b"(3) shall include in that rule a statement describing the reasonable efforts that will be used to comply with the requirements of 1.2(12) "b."

1.2(13) Review by commission of rules.

a. Any interested person, association, agency, or political subdivision may submit a written request to the administrative rules coordinator requesting the commission to conduct a formal review of a specified rule. Upon approval of that request by the administrative rules coordinator, the commission shall conduct a formal review of a specified rule to determine whether a new rule should be adopted instead or the rule should be amended or repealed. The commission may refuse to conduct a review if it has conducted such a review of the specified rule within five years prior to the filing of the written request.

b. In conducting the formal review, the commission shall prepare within a reasonable time a written report summarizing its findings, its supporting reasons, and any proposed course of action. The report must include a concise statement of the commission's findings regarding the rule's effectiveness in achieving its objectives, including a summary of any available supporting data. The report shall also concisely describe significant written criticisms of the rule received during the previous five years, including a summary of any petitions for waiver of the rule received by the commission or granted by the commission. The report shall describe alternative solutions to resolve the criticisms of the rule, the reasons any were rejected, and any changes made in the rule in response to the criticisms as well as the reasons for the changes. A copy of the commission's report shall be sent to the administrative rules review committee.

[ARC 8749B, IAB 5/5/10, effective 6/9/10; Editorial change: IAC Supplement 7/23/25]

161—1.3(216) Procedures for oral or written presentations.

1.3(1) Except where oral or written presentations are deemed unnecessary by the commission in accordance with section 17A.4(2), the commission shall allow for the submission of oral or written presentations, or both, prior to its adoption of any rules.

1.3(2) Interested persons shall have 20 days from the date of publication of notice in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin to submit written requests for oral presentations or to submit with presentations.

1.3(3) Notice of date, time and place of oral presentations by requesting parties will be published by appropriate media at least 20 days in advance with specific notice to requesting parties given by certified mail.

1.3(4) Interested parties may be limited to submitting written presentations at the discretion of the commission except when oral presentations are required by Iowa Code section 17A.4(1) "b."

[Editorial change: IAC Supplement 7/23/25]

161—1.4(216) Procedure for obtaining declaratory orders.

1.4(1) *Petition for declaratory order.* Any person may file a petition with the commission for a declaratory order as to the applicability to specified circumstances of a statute, rule, or order within the primary jurisdiction of the commission, at its location as defined in 161—paragraph 1.1(1) "b." A petition is deemed filed when it is received by that office. The commission shall provide the petitioner with a file-stamped copy of the petition if the petitioner provides the commission an extra copy for this purpose. The petition must be typewritten or legibly handwritten in ink and must substantially conform to the following form:

Petition by (Name of Petitioner)
for a Declaratory Order on
(Cite provisions of law involved).

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PETITION FOR
DECLARATORY ORDER

The petition must provide the following information:

1. A clear and concise statement of all relevant facts on which the order is requested.
2. A citation and the relevant language of the specific statutes, rules, policies, decisions, or orders, whose applicability is questioned, and any other relevant law.
3. The questions petitioner wants answered, stated clearly and concisely.
4. The answers to questions desired by the petitioner and a summary of the reasons urged by the petitioner in support of those answers.
5. The reasons for requesting the declaratory order and disclosure of the petitioner's interest in the outcome.
6. A statement indicating whether the petitioner is currently a party to another proceeding involving the questions at issue and whether, to the petitioner's knowledge, those questions have been decided by, are pending determination by, or are under investigation by, any governmental entity.
7. The names and addresses of other persons, or a description of any class of persons, known by petitioner to be affected by, or interested in, the questions presented in the petition.
8. Any request by petitioner for a meeting provided by 1.4(7).

The petition must be dated and signed by the petitioner or the petitioner's representative. It must also include the name, mailing address, and telephone number of the petitioner and petitioner's representative, and a statement indicating the person to whom communications concerning the petition should be directed.

1.4(2) Notice of petition. Within 15 days after receipt of a petition for a declaratory order, the commission shall give notice of the petition to all persons not served by the petitioner pursuant to 1.4(6) to whom notice is required by any provision of law. The commission may also give notice to other persons.

1.4(3) Intervention.

a. Persons who qualify under any applicable provision of law as an intervenor and who file a petition for intervention within 30 days of the filing of a petition for declaratory order shall be allowed to intervene in a proceeding for a declaratory order.

b. Any person who files a petition for intervention at any time prior to the issuance of an order may be allowed to intervene in a proceeding for a declaratory order at the discretion of the commission.

c. A petition for intervention shall be filed at the commission office. Such a petition is deemed filed when it is received by that office. The commission will provide the petitioner with a file-stamped copy of the petition for intervention if the petitioner provides an extra copy for this purpose. A petition for intervention must be typewritten or legibly handwritten in ink and must substantially conform to the following form:

IOWA CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

Petition by (Name of Original Petitioner)
for a Declaratory Order on
(Cite provisions of law cited in original petition).

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PETITION FOR
INTERVENTION

The petition for intervention must provide the following information:

- (1) Facts supporting the intervenor's standing and qualifications for intervention.
- (2) The answers urged by the intervenor to the question or questions presented and a summary of the reasons urged in support of those answers.
- (3) Reasons for requesting intervention and disclosure of the intervenor's interest in the outcome.
- (4) A statement indicating whether the intervenor is currently a party to any proceeding involving the questions at issue and whether, to the intervenor's knowledge, those questions have been decided by, are pending determination by, or are under investigation by, any governmental entity.
- (5) The names and addresses of any additional persons, or a description of any additional class of persons known by the intervenor to be affected by, or interested in, the questions presented.

(6) Whether the intervenor consents to be bound by the determination of the matters presented in the declaratory order proceeding.

The petition must be dated and signed by the intervenor or the intervenor's representative. It must also include the name, mailing address, and telephone number of the intervenor and intervenor's representative, and a statement indicating the person to whom communications should be directed.

1.4(4) Briefs. The petitioner or any intervenor may file a brief in support of the position urged. The commission may request a brief from the petitioner, any intervenor, or from any other person concerning the questions raised.

1.4(5) Inquiries. Inquiries concerning the status of a declaratory order proceeding may be made to the executive director at the commission's office.

1.4(6) Service and filing of petitions and other papers.

a. When service required. Except where otherwise provided by law, every petition for declaratory order, petition for intervention, brief, or other paper filed in a proceeding for a declaratory order shall be served upon each of the parties of record to the proceeding, and on all other persons identified in the petition for declaratory order or petition for intervention as affected by or interested in the questions presented, simultaneously with their filing. The party filing a document is responsible for service on all parties and other affected or interested persons.

b. Filing—when required. All petitions for declaratory orders, petitions for intervention, briefs, or other papers in a proceeding for a declaratory order shall be filed with the commission at its location as defined in 161—paragraph 1.1(1)“b.” All petitions, briefs, or other papers that are required to be served upon a party shall be filed simultaneously with the Iowa civil rights commission.

c. Method of service, time of filing, and proof of mailing. Method of service shall be by regular mail. Time of filing and proof of mailing shall be as provided by 161—subrule 3.5(8).

1.4(7) Consideration. Upon request by petitioner, the commission must schedule a brief and informal meeting between the original petitioner, all intervenors, and the commission, a member of the commission, or a member of the staff of the commission, to discuss the questions raised. The commission may solicit comments from any person on the questions raised. Also, comments on the questions raised may be submitted to the commission by any person.

1.4(8) Action on petition.

a. Within the time allowed by 1998 Iowa Acts, chapter 1202, section 13(5), after receipt of a petition for a declaratory order, the executive director or designee shall take action on the petition as required by 1998 Iowa Acts, chapter 1202, section 13(5).

b. The date of issuance of an order or of a refusal to issue an order is as defined in Iowa Code section 216.17(1).

c. Within 20 days of the issuance of a declaratory order, the petitioner or intervenors may appeal that order to the commissioners. The commissioners will consider the appeal at a subsequent commissioners' meeting and will either affirm, overturn, or remand the order.

1.4(9) Refusal to issue order.

a. The commission shall not issue a declaratory order where prohibited by 1998 Iowa Acts, chapter 1202, section 13(1), and may refuse to issue a declaratory order on some or all questions raised for the following reasons:

- (1) The petition does not substantially comply with the required form.
- (2) The petition does not contain facts sufficient to demonstrate that the petitioner will be aggrieved or adversely affected by the failure of the commission to issue an order.
- (3) The commission does not have jurisdiction over the questions presented in the petition.
- (4) The questions presented by the petition are also presented in a current rule making, contested case, or other agency or judicial proceeding, that may definitively resolve them.
- (5) The questions presented by the petition would more properly be resolved in a different type of proceeding or by another body with jurisdiction over the matter.
- (6) The facts or questions presented in the petition are unclear, overbroad, insufficient, or otherwise inappropriate as a basis upon which to issue an order.

(7) There is no need to issue an order because the questions raised in the petition have been settled due to a change in circumstances.

(8) The petition is not based upon facts calculated to aid in the planning of future conduct but is, instead, based solely upon prior conduct in an effort to establish the effect of that conduct or to challenge an agency decision already made.

(9) The petition requests a declaratory order that would necessarily determine the legal rights, duties, or responsibilities of other persons who have not joined in the petition, intervened separately, or filed a similar petition and whose position on the questions presented may fairly be presumed to be adverse to that of petitioner.

(10) The petitioner requests the commission to determine whether a statute is unconstitutional on its face.

b. A refusal to issue a declaratory order must indicate the specific grounds for the refusal and constitutes final agency action on the petition.

c. Refusal to issue a declaratory order pursuant to this provision does not preclude the filing of a new petition that seeks to eliminate the grounds for the refusal to issue an order.

1.4(10) *Contents of declaratory order—effective date.* In addition to the order itself, a declaratory order must contain the date of its issuance, the name of petitioner and all intervenors, the specific statutes, rules, policies, decisions, or orders involved, the particular facts upon which it is based, and the reasons for its conclusion.

A declaratory order is effective on the date of issuance.

1.4(11) *Copies of orders.* A copy of all orders issued in response to a petition for a declaratory order shall be mailed promptly to the original petitioner and all intervenors.

1.4(12) *Effect of declaratory order.* A declaratory order has the same status and binding effect as a final order issued in a contested case proceeding. It is binding on the commission, the petitioner, and any intervenors who consent to be bound and is applicable only in circumstances where the relevant facts and the law involved are indistinguishable from those on which the order was based. As to all other persons, a declaratory order serves only as precedent and is not binding on the commission. The issuance of a declaratory order constitutes final agency action on the petition.

[Editorial change: IAC Supplement 7/23/25]

161—1.5(216) Forms. Forms commonly used by the commission are generally available through the commission's Web site or by telephoning the commission staff.

1.5(1) *"Charge of Discrimination,"* EEOC 5c, for a complaint alleging a discriminatory or unfair practice or act in all jurisdictional areas except housing.

1.5(2) *"Housing Discrimination Complaint,"* HUD 903, for a complaint alleging a discriminatory or unfair practice or act in the jurisdictional area of housing.

1.5(3) *"Authorization Release Form,"* to secure authorization for relevant client information.

1.5(4) *"Administrative Release Form,"* to request a "right to sue" letter.

1.5(5) *"Request for Withdrawal of Charge of Discrimination,"* is used by the complainant to withdraw the charge of discrimination previously filed.

1.5(6) *"Amended complaint,"* to amend the charge of discrimination previously filed.

1.5(7) *"Forms notebook."* Other forms commonly used by the commission or its staff are compiled within a "forms notebook." The notebook is available for inspection by the public at the commission offices. Copies of the forms notebook can be obtained for an appropriate copying charge.

1.5(8) *"Purpose of forms."* The existence of standard forms is for the convenience of the commission, the public, and the parties. The existence of a standard form does not imply that the purpose of the standard form cannot be accomplished through a document in a different form.

[ARC 8749B, IAB 5/5/10, effective 6/9/10; Editorial change: IAC Supplement 7/23/25]

161—1.6(216) Referral and deferral agencies.

1.6(1) *Statement of purpose.* It is the purpose of the commission, in adopting these rules to promote the efficient enforcement of the Act. To this end, the commission will use referral and deferral agreements to encourage agencies with similar powers and jurisdiction to:

- a. Develop procedures with remedies necessary to ensure the protection of rights secured by the Iowa Civil Rights Act.
- b. Increase the efficiency of their operations.
- c. Cooperate more fully with the commission in the sharing of data and resources, and
- d. Coordinate investigations and conciliations with the commission in order to eliminate needless duplication.

1.6(2) Definitions.

a. “Agency” refers to any agency of municipal government established by ordinance for the purpose of eliminating discrimination on any basis protected by the Act or any state or federal governmental unit with jurisdiction over allegations of discrimination that is capable of obtaining remedies similar to those obtainable by the commission.

b. “Referral” means the process by which the commission cross-files a charge of discrimination with a referral agency, which extinguishes the legal ability of the commission to process the charge; provided, however, that the referral agency accepts the referred charge and that the commission has the reciprocal right to accept or reject charges cross-filed by the referral agency.

c. “Referral agency” means any agency of local government that has been awarded that status by contract with the commission.

d. “Deferral” refers to the process whereby the commission notifies an agency of local, state, or federal government that a complaint has been filed with the commission and that the commission will postpone its investigative activities for a period of 60 days while the deferral agency investigates and attempts to resolve the matter. Extensions of this time period may be granted by the commission or the executive director when just cause is shown by the agency for the time extension requested.

e. “Deferral agency” means any agency so designated by contract pursuant to these rules.

1.6(3) Procedure for obtaining referral status.

a. *Guidelines for designation.* The executive director will evaluate the applications of agencies and may designate agencies as referral agencies where they conform to the following guidelines:

(1) The agency should have professional staff to enable it to comprehensively investigate complaints and to ensure the processing of the charges expeditiously.

(2) The ordinance or enabling legislation under which the agency is established must provide at a minimum the same rights and remedies to discrimination as available under the Act, and

(3) The enabling legislation of the agency shall provide, at a minimum, that the agency may hold public hearings, issue cease and desist orders, and award damages to injured parties which shall include, but are not limited to, actual damages.

b. *Application.* Any agency desiring to be designated as a referral agency by the commission may send a letter of application to the executive director of the commission. Attached to the application must be a copy of the agency’s enabling ordinance, a list of its investigatory personnel, the average number of hours worked by each per week, and a report for the previous 12-month period detailing the following:

(1) The number of cases filed with the agency,

(2) The number of probable cause and no probable cause findings,

(3) The number of cases successfully conciliated,

(4) The number of cases taken to public hearing,

(5) The average length of time spent investigating each case,

(6) The cumulative remedies obtained for the previous 12-month period and average remedy obtained per case,

(7) An assessment of the quality of the agency’s investigation,

(8) The agency’s standards to preserve quality investigations, and

(9) The status of the agency’s caseload.

c. *Rejection of application.* Where the executive director determines that an agency does not qualify as a referral agency, the director shall so inform the agency in writing along with the reasons for the agency’s rejection.

If the reasons for the agency's rejection are corrected, the agency will then be designated as a referral agency. The executive director's decision may be appealed to the commission at its subsequent regular meeting.

d. Designation and contract. Where the executive director determines that an agency is qualified as a referral agency, the director will prepare a contract between the commission and the agency containing the terms on which cases will be referred. Upon execution of the contract, the executive director will designate the agency as a referral agency.

e. Terms of the referral contract. The referral contract shall be negotiated with the referral agency, but shall include the following:

(1) Terms prohibiting a complainant who has filed with the commission from cross-filing with a referral agency and vice versa,

(2) Terms permitting the commission to refer complaints filed with it to a referral agency for processing and vice versa,

(3) Terms prohibiting the commission from processing a charge referred to and accepted by the referral agency and vice versa,

(4) Terms permitting the commission or a referral agency to reject a charge referred to it for processing,

(5) Terms ending the contract after two years, subject to renegotiation, and

(6) Any other terms mutually agreed upon.

1.6(4) Procedure for obtaining deferral status.

a. Application. Any agency desiring to be designated as a deferral agency by the commission may send a letter of application to the executive director of the commission. Attached to the application must be a copy of the agency's enabling legislation or grant of jurisdiction, a list of its personnel and statement indicating their permanent or part-time status, their functions, and a summary of the agency's prior efforts at preventing and eliminating discrimination. The application must also explain how the agency is capable of obtaining remedies substantially similar to those available under the Act.

b. Guidelines for designation. The executive director will evaluate the applications of all agencies and may designate deferral agencies where the agencies conform to the following guidelines:

(1) The agency should have available resources to enable it to investigate complaints to ensure processing within a reasonable period of time,

(2) The agency's enabling legislation or grant of jurisdiction must permit it to obtain substantially the same remedies as are available under the Act,

(3) The agency must be able to make a diligent effort to investigate and resolve the complaints filed with it, and

(4) The agency is capable of obtaining remedies substantially similar to those available under the Act by informal means.

c. Rejection of application. Where the executive director determines that an agency does not qualify as a deferral agency, the director shall so inform the agency in writing along with the reasons for the agency's rejection.

If the reasons for the agency's rejection are corrected, the agency will then be designated as a deferral agency. The executive director's decision may be appealed to the commission at its subsequent regular meeting.

d. Designation and contract. Where the executive director determines that an agency is qualified as a deferral agency, the director will prepare a contract between the commission and the agency containing the terms on which cases will be deferred. After execution of the contract, the executive director will designate the agency as a deferral agency.

e. Terms of the deferral contract. The deferral contract shall include, subject to negotiations with the agency, the following:

(1) The commission will agree to notify the deferral agency of all complaints filed with the commission which are within the deferral agency's jurisdiction, except where a complainant requests in written form that the deferral agency not be notified.

(2) The deferral agency will agree to aid all complainants whose complaints come within the commission's jurisdiction in completing the commission's complaint forms as well as notarizing them and forwarding the fully executed forms to the commission where the necessity to file a formal complaint exists. If, however, a matter may be resolved informally more expeditiously the deferral agency will simply notify the commission by letter of the complaint and resolution obtained. "Informally resolved complaints" shall refer to complaints that can be resolved within ten days.

(3) The commission will agree to postpone its investigation for at least 60 days of any complaint filed with a deferral agency unless otherwise agreed to by both parties. These waiver agreements will be made on an individual case basis.

(4) The agency will agree not to disclose the filing of a complaint or confidential information pertaining to a complaint until the complaint has been officially set for public hearing.

(5) The commission and the deferral agency shall share copies of all findings, case summaries, and conciliation agreements.

(6) Where a complaint is on file with a deferral agency, the commission will allow the deferral agency access to the contents of the complainant's file provided that the deferral agency allows the commission like privileges and has not previously disclosed confidential information prior to public hearing.

(7) Photocopying of materials from commission files for use by a deferral agency is solely at the discretion of the commission staff, but will not be unreasonably denied. When the commission copies from the agency's file, the agency shall be reasonably compensated for copying costs.

(8) The commission will give substantial weight to the findings of a deferral agency where pertinent and relevant factual evidence exists to support those findings.

(9) The commission will not necessarily be bound by the agency's conclusions of law.

(10) Where a deferral agency reaches a finding of probable cause to support an allegation of discrimination the contract may permit the agency to pursue conciliation, or to refer the case back to the commission for conciliation. The contract may also permit an agency that has attempted conciliation to refer that case back to the commission for public hearing. In no case where a case has been referred back to the commission will it be referred back to the agency. Where a case is conciliated or a hearing is held by the agency or the commission, both will be bound by the final determination.

(11) The period for which the contract will be in effect shall not exceed two years, subject to renegotiation.

(12) The contract may contain other terms agreed to by the parties.

[Editorial change: IAC Supplement 7/23/25]

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