

193—7.14(17A) Disqualification.

7.14(1) A presiding officer or other person will withdraw from participation in the making of any proposed or final decision in a contested case if that person:

- a.* Has a personal bias or prejudice concerning a party or a representative of a party;
- b.* Has personally investigated, prosecuted or advocated in connection with that case, the specific controversy underlying that case, another pending factually related contested case, or a pending factually related controversy that may culminate in a contested case involving the same parties;
- c.* Is subject to the authority, direction or discretion of any person who has personally investigated, prosecuted or advocated, in connection with that contested case, the specific controversy underlying that contested case, or a pending factually related contested case or controversy involving the same parties;
- d.* Has acted as counsel to any person who is a private party to that proceeding within the past two years;
- e.* Has a personal financial interest in the outcome of the case or any other significant personal interest that could be substantially affected by the outcome of the case;
- f.* Has a spouse or relative within the third degree of relationship who (1) is a party to the case, or an officer, director or trustee of a party; (2) is a lawyer in the case; (3) is known to have an interest that could be substantially affected by the outcome of the case; or (4) is likely to be a material witness in the case; or
- g.* Has any other legally sufficient cause to withdraw from participation in the decision making in that case.

7.14(2) The term “personally investigated” means taking affirmative steps to interview witnesses directly or to obtain documents or other information directly. The term “personally investigated” does not include general direction and supervision of assigned investigators, unsolicited receipt of information that is relayed to assigned investigators, review of another person’s investigative work product in the course of determining whether there is probable cause to initiate a proceeding, or exposure to factual information while performing other board functions, including fact gathering for purposes other than investigation of the matter that culminates in a contested case. A person voluntarily appearing before the board or a committee of the board waives any objection to a board member or board staff both participating in the appearance and later participating as a decision maker or aid to the decision maker in a contested case. Factual information relevant to the merits of a contested case received by a person who later serves as presiding officer in that case will be disclosed if required by Iowa Code section 17A.17(3) and subrule 7.28(9).

7.14(3) In a situation where a presiding officer or other person knows of information that might reasonably be deemed to be a basis for disqualification and decides voluntary withdrawal is unnecessary, that person will submit the relevant information for the record by affidavit and provide for the record a statement of the reasons for the determination that withdrawal is unnecessary.

7.14(4) If a party asserts disqualification on any appropriate ground, including those listed in subrule 7.14(1), the party will file a motion supported by an affidavit pursuant to Iowa Code sections 17A.11(3) and 17A.17(7). The motion will need to be filed as soon as practicable after the reason alleged in the motion becomes known to the party.

7.14(5) If, during the course of the hearing, a party first becomes aware of evidence of bias or other grounds for disqualification, the party may move for disqualification but will need to establish the grounds by the introduction of evidence into the record.

7.14(6) A motion to disqualify a board member or other person will first be directed to the affected board member or other person for determination. If the board member or other person determines that disqualification is appropriate, the board member or other person will withdraw from further participation in the case. If the board member or other person determines that withdrawal is not required, the presiding officer will promptly review that determination, provided that, if the person at issue is an administrative law judge, the review will be by the board. If the presiding officer determines that disqualification is appropriate, the board member or other person will withdraw. If the presiding officer determines that withdrawal is not required, the presiding officer will enter an order to that effect. A party asserting disqualification may seek an interlocutory appeal under rule 193—7.31(17A), if applicable, and seek a stay under rule 193—7.34(17A).

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