

561—7.6(17A,455A) Informal settlement negotiations.

7.6(1) *Informal settlement encouraged.* Unless precluded by statute, informal settlement of controversies is encouraged when those controversies may culminate in contested case proceedings according to the provisions of Iowa Code chapter 17A and these rules. However, this rule shall not be construed to require any party other than the department to utilize informal procedures or to settle the controversy pursuant to informal procedures.

7.6(2) *Opportunity to pursue informal settlement.* A party to a contested case may request an opportunity to pursue informal settlement. The request shall be in writing and shall be delivered to the director with a copy to the Bureau Chief, Legal Services Bureau, Department of Natural Resources, 502 East 9th Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319. Upon receipt of the request, further proceedings shall be delayed and no contested case hearing date shall be set, except in the case of emergency orders as provided in rule 561—7.18(17A,455A). Informal settlement negotiations may include verbal or written communications between or among parties. At the request of any party, the appeal shall be transmitted to the department of inspections and appeals. Settlement negotiations may continue following transmittal.