

751—4.26(17A) Posthearing procedures and orders.

4.26(1) *Filing by parties of briefs and proposed findings.* The presiding officer may ask the parties to submit proposed findings and conclusions of law and a proposed order or briefs. Copies of the submission shall be served on all parties. The submission schedule, including waiver or briefs, shall be determined at the close of the hearing.

4.26(2) *Final decision or order.*

a. When a quorum of the entire commission presides over the reception of evidence at the hearing, its decision is a final decision. The decision shall be in writing and shall include findings of fact and conclusions of law in conformance with Iowa Code chapter 17A.

b. In a contested case in which the hearing is held before an administrative law judge or a panel of commission members constituting less than a quorum of the board, the presiding officer or panel shall render a proposed decision. The proposed decision shall be in writing and shall include findings of fact and conclusions of law in conformance with Iowa Code chapter 17A. The proposed decision becomes the final decision of the commission without further proceedings unless there is an appeal to, or review on motion of, the commission within 30 days.

4.26(3) *Decisions and orders.*

a. By whom prepared. The presiding officer who presided at the reception of evidence shall prepare a proposed or final decision or order in each case. Findings of fact shall be prepared by the presiding officer at the reception of the evidence in a case unless the officer becomes unavailable. If the officer is unavailable, the findings of fact may be prepared by another person qualified to be a presiding officer who has read the record, unless demeanor of witnesses is a substantial factor. If demeanor is a substantial factor and the presiding officer is unavailable, the portions of the hearing involving demeanor shall be heard again or the case shall be dismissed.

b. Content of decision or order. The proposed or final decision or order shall:

- (1) Be in writing or stated in the record.
- (2) Include findings of fact. Findings of fact, if set forth in statutory language, shall be accompanied by a concise and explicit statement of underlying facts supporting the findings. If a party submitted proposed finding of fact in accordance with subrule 4.26(1), the decision or order shall include a ruling upon each proposed finding.
- (3) Include conclusions of law, supported by cited authority or reasoned opinion.

c. Delivery. A copy of the proposed decision or order shall be delivered to the parties either by personal service or by certified mail, return receipt requested.