

751—4.6(17A) Presiding officer.

4.6(1) In each contested case in which Iowa Code chapter 17A requires an evidentiary hearing, the chair of the commission will determine whether the hearing shall be held before the commission, one or more members of the commission, or an administrative law judge. Any party who wishes to request that the presiding officer assigned to render a proposed decision be an administrative law judge employed by the department of inspections and appeals must file a written request within 20 days after service of a notice of hearing which identifies or describes the presiding officer as the commission head or members of the commission.

4.6(2) The executive director may deny the request only upon a finding that one or more of the following apply:

a. Neither the commission nor any officer of the commission under whose authority the contested case is to take place is a named party to the proceeding or a real party in interest to that proceeding.

b. There is a compelling need to expedite issuance of a final decision in order to protect the public health, safety, or welfare.

c. The case involves significant policy issues of first impression that are inextricably intertwined with the factual issues presented.

d. The demeanor of the witnesses is likely to be dispositive in resolving the disputed factual issues.

e. Funds are unavailable to pay the costs of an administrative law judge and an intercommission appeal.

f. The request was not timely filed.

g. The request is not consistent with a specified statute.

4.6(3) The executive director shall issue a written ruling specifying the grounds for its decision within 20 days after a request for an administrative law judge is filed. If the ruling is contingent upon the availability of an administrative law judge with the qualifications identified in subrule 4.6(4), the parties shall be notified at least 10 days prior to the hearing if a qualified administrative law judge will not be available.

4.6(4) An administrative law judge assigned to act as presiding officer in telecommunications matters shall have the following technical expertise: must be familiar with telecommunications transactions.

4.6(5) Except as provided otherwise by another provision of law, all rulings by an administrative law judge acting as presiding officer are subject to appeal to the commission. A party must seek any available intracommission appeal in order to exhaust adequate administrative remedies.

4.6(6) Unless otherwise provided by law, commission heads and members of multimembered commission heads, when reviewing a proposed decision upon intracommission appeal, shall have the powers of and shall comply with the provisions of this chapter which apply to presiding officers.