

481—435.23(272C) Settlement agreements.

435.23(1) Settlement negotiations after the notice of hearing may be initiated by the licensee or other respondent, the prosecuting attorney, the board's executive officer, or the board chair or chair's designee.

435.23(2) The board chair or chair's designee may negotiate on behalf of the board but does not have the authority to bind the board to a particular term of settlement.

435.23(3) The respondent is not obligated to participate in settlement negotiations. The respondent's initiation or consent to settlement negotiations constitutes a waiver of notice and opportunity to be heard during the settlement negotiation pursuant to Iowa Code section 17A.17 and rule 481—435.27(17A). Thereafter, the prosecuting attorney is authorized to discuss informal settlement with the board chair or chair's designee, and the designated board member is not disqualified from participating in the adjudication of the contested case.

435.23(4) Unless designated to negotiate, no member of the board shall be involved in settlement negotiation until a written consent order is submitted to the full board for approval. No informal settlement will be submitted to the full board unless it is in final written form executed by the respondent. By signing the proposed consent order, the respondent authorizes the prosecuting attorney or executive officer to have ex parte communications with the board related to the terms of the settlement. If the board fails to approve the consent order, it shall be of no force and effect to either party and shall not be admissible at hearing. Upon rejecting a proposed consent order, the board may suggest alternative terms of settlement, which the respondent is free to accept or reject.

435.23(5) If the board and respondent agree to a consent order, the consent order constitutes the final decision of the board. By electing to resolve a contested case through consent order, the respondent waives all rights to a hearing and attendant rights. A consent order in a licensee disciplinary case has the force and effect of a final disciplinary order entered in a contested case and may be published as provided in subrule 435.30(1).

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