

281—2.5(17A) Public participation.

2.5(1) *Written comments.* For at least 20 days after publication of the Notice of Intended Action, persons may submit argument, data, and views, in writing, on the proposed rule. Such written submissions should identify the proposed rule to which they relate and should be submitted to Department of Education, Legal Consultant's Office, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0146, or the person designated in the Notice of Intended Action.

2.5(2) *Oral proceedings.* The agency may, at any time, schedule an oral proceeding on a proposed rule. The agency shall schedule an oral proceeding on a proposed rule if, within 20 days after the published Notice of Intended Action, a written request for an opportunity to make oral presentations is submitted to the agency by the administrative rules review committee, a governmental subdivision, an agency, an association having not less than 25 members, or at least 25 persons. That request must also contain the following additional information:

1. A request by one or more individual persons must be signed by each of them and include the address and telephone number of each of them.

2. A request by an association must be signed by an officer or designee of the association and must contain a statement that the association has at least 25 members and the address and telephone number of the person signing that request.

3. A request by an agency or governmental subdivision must be signed by an official having authority to act on behalf of the entity and must contain the address and telephone number of the person signing that request.

2.5(3) *Conduct of oral proceedings.*

a. Applicability. This subrule applies only to those oral rule-making proceedings in which an opportunity to make oral presentations is authorized or required by Iowa Code section 17A.4(1) "b" as amended by 1998 Iowa Acts, chapter 1202, section 8, or this chapter.

b. Scheduling and notice. An oral proceeding on a proposed rule may be held in one or more locations and shall not be held earlier than 20 days after notice of its location and time is published in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin. That notice shall also identify the proposed rule by ARC number and citation to the Iowa Administrative Bulletin.

c. Presiding officer. The agency, a member of the agency, or another person designated by the agency who will be familiar with the substance of the proposed rule, shall preside at the oral proceeding on a proposed rule. If the agency does not preside, the presiding officer shall prepare a memorandum for consideration by the agency summarizing the contents of the presentations made at the oral proceeding unless the agency determines that such a memorandum is unnecessary because the agency will personally listen to or read the entire transcript of the oral proceeding.

d. Conduct of proceeding. At an oral proceeding on a proposed rule, persons may make oral statements and make documentary and physical submissions, which may include data, views, comments or arguments concerning the proposed rule. Persons wishing to make oral presentations at such a proceeding are encouraged to notify the agency at least one business day prior to the proceeding and indicate the general subject of their presentations. At the proceeding, those who participate shall indicate their names and addresses, identify any persons or organizations they may represent, and provide any other information relating to their participation deemed appropriate by the presiding officer. Oral proceedings shall be open to the public and shall be recorded by stenographic or electronic means.

(1) At the beginning of the oral proceeding, the presiding officer shall give a brief synopsis of the proposed rule, a statement of the statutory authority for the proposed rule, and the reasons for the agency decision to propose the rule. The presiding officer may place time limitations on individual oral presentations when necessary to ensure the orderly and expeditious conduct of the oral proceeding. To encourage joint oral presentations and to avoid repetition, additional time may be provided for persons whose presentations represent the views of other individuals as well as their own views.

(2) Persons making oral presentations are encouraged to avoid restating matters which have already been submitted in writing.

(3) To facilitate the exchange of information, the presiding officer may, where time permits, open the floor to questions or general discussion.

(4) The presiding officer shall have the authority to take any reasonable action necessary for the orderly conduct of the meeting.

(5) Physical and documentary submissions presented by participants in the oral proceeding shall be submitted to the presiding officer. Such submissions become the property of the agency.

(6) The oral proceeding may be continued by the presiding officer to a later time without notice other than by announcement at the hearing.

(7) Participants in an oral proceeding shall not be required to take an oath or to submit to cross-examination. However, the presiding officer in an oral proceeding may question participants and permit the questioning of participants by other participants about any matter relating to that rule-making proceeding, including any prior written submissions made by those participants in that proceeding; but no participant shall be required to answer any question.

(8) The presiding officer in an oral proceeding may permit rebuttal statements and request the filing of written statements subsequent to the adjournment of the oral presentations.

2.5(4) *Additional information.* In addition to receiving written comments and oral presentations on a proposed rule according to the provisions of this rule, the agency may obtain information concerning a proposed rule through any other lawful means deemed appropriate under the circumstances.

2.5(5) *Accessibility.* The agency shall schedule oral proceedings in rooms accessible to and functional for persons with physical disabilities. Persons who have special requirements should contact the Legal Consultant's Office, Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0146, or telephone (515)281-5295 in advance to arrange access or other needed services.