

161—4.17(17A) Evidence.

4.17(1) The presiding officer shall rule on admissibility of evidence and may, where appropriate, take official notice of facts in accordance with all applicable requirements of law.

4.17(2) Stipulation of facts is encouraged. The presiding officer may make a decision based on stipulated facts. Stipulated facts are binding on the presiding officer and the commission when it has not been proven that the stipulation was the result of fraud, wrongdoing, misrepresentation, or was not in accord with the intent of the parties.

4.17(3) Evidence in the proceeding shall be confined to the issues as to which the parties received notice prior to the hearing unless the parties waive their right to such notice by express or implied waiver, or the presiding officer determines that good cause justifies their expansion. If the presiding officer decides to admit evidence on issues outside the scope of notice over the objection of a party who did not have actual notice of those issues, that party, upon timely motion, shall receive a continuance sufficient to amend pleadings and to prepare on the additional issue. The scope of the issues at public hearing may include the facts as uncovered in the investigation and need not be limited to the allegations as stated in the original complaint.

4.17(4) The party seeking admission of an exhibit must provide opposing parties with an opportunity to examine the exhibit prior to the ruling on its admissibility. Copies of documents should normally be provided to opposing parties. All exhibits admitted into evidence shall be appropriately marked and be made part of the record.

4.17(5) Any party may object to specific evidence or may request limits on the scope of any examination or cross-examination. Such an objection shall be accompanied by a brief statement of the grounds upon which it is based. The objection, the ruling on the objection, and the reasons for the ruling shall be noted in the record. The presiding officer may rule on the objection at the time it is made or may reserve ruling until the written decision. Evidentiary objections, other than those based on relevancy, materiality, unduly repetitious evidence, privilege, discovery rules, or scope of examination, or any ground for which a ruling is compulsory as a matter of law, shall be simply noted in the record by the presiding officer.

4.17(6) Whenever evidence is ruled inadmissible, the party offering that exhibit may submit an offer of proof on the record. The party making the offer of proof for excluded oral testimony shall briefly summarize the testimony or, with permission of the presiding officer, present the testimony. If the excluded evidence consists of a document of exhibit, it shall be marked as part of an offer of proof and inserted in the record.

4.17(7) Although the rules of evidence do not apply in a contested case hearing, a finding shall be based upon the kind of evidence on which reasonably prudent persons are accustomed to rely for the conduct of their serious affairs, and may be based upon such evidence even if it would be inadmissible in a jury trial. Irrelevant, immaterial, or unduly repetitious evidence shall be excluded. The commission shall give effect to the rules of privilege recognized by law.

4.17(8) The authenticity of all documents submitted as proposed exhibits at the prehearing conference shall be deemed admitted unless objection is made at the prehearing conference or a written objection to authenticity of a document is filed at least ten days prior to the hearing. A party will be permitted to challenge authenticity at a later time upon a clear showing of good cause for failure to have made the objection earlier. A party's objection to authenticity is that party's refusal to admit the fact of authenticity and need not be ruled upon to be effective. If authenticity is not admitted under this rule it may be proved at hearing by any means permitted by law.

4.17(9) No evidence shall be received at any hearing concerning offers or counter-offers of adjustment during efforts to conciliate or settle an alleged unfair or discriminatory practice.