

621—4.2(20) Unit determination.

4.2(1) *Content of petition.* A petition for bargaining unit determination shall be on an agency-prescribed form and filed with the agency. The petition shall identify and describe the proposed unit and indicate the unit's status as a public safety or non-public safety unit.

4.2(2) *Notice to parties.* Upon the filing of a proper petition, the agency shall serve copies thereof upon other interested parties by certified mail, return receipt requested. The agency shall file a notice to employees, giving notice that the petition has been filed and setting forth the rights of employees under Iowa Code chapter 20. The employer shall promptly post the petition and notice to employees in the manner and locations customarily used for the posting of information to employees. If the public employer customarily distributes information to employees by additional means, such as by email or hard copy, the public employer shall also promptly distribute the petition and notice to employees by those means.

4.2(3) *Notice of hearing.* The board or administrative law judge shall file a notice of hearing setting forth the time, date and place of the hearing and any other relevant information. The public employer shall promptly post the notice in the manner and locations customarily used for the posting of information to employees. If the public employer customarily distributes information to employees by additional means, such as by email or hard copy, the employer shall also promptly distribute the notice to employees by those means.

4.2(4) *Intervention.* See rule 621—2.4(20).

4.2(5) *Professional/nonprofessional unit elections.* Should the agency determine, in any case, that professional and nonprofessional employees are appropriately included in the same bargaining unit, the agency shall file an order directing that an election be conducted to determine whether the professional and nonprofessional employees wish to be represented in a single bargaining unit. The election shall be conducted in accordance with rule 621—5.8(20).

4.2(6) *Informal settlement of bargaining unit determination.* Cases on bargaining unit determination may be informally settled in the following manner:

a. The parties may stipulate to the composition of the unit.

(1) The petitioning party shall prepare a stipulation setting forth in detail the composition of the bargaining unit as agreed upon by all parties. The stipulation shall be signed by the authorized representatives of the parties involved and shall be filed with the agency for informal review and tentative approval. In the event the parties agree to a combined unit of professional and nonprofessional employees, the stipulation shall set forth both those job classifications included within the professional category and those job classifications included within the nonprofessional category.

(2) If the agency fails to tentatively approve the stipulation, the agency shall notify the parties and, unless the parties amend the stipulation in a manner to gain tentative approval of the agency, the matter shall proceed to hearing.

(3) If the agency tentatively approves the stipulation, the agency shall file a public notice of proposed decision. The public employer shall promptly post copies of the notice of the proposed decision, for a period of not less than one calendar week, in a prominent place in the main office of the public employer accessible to the general public and in the manner and locations customarily used for the posting of information to employees. If the public employer customarily distributes information to employees by additional means, such as by email or hard copy, the employer shall also promptly distribute such notice to employees by those means. The public employer shall also have copies of the notice available for distribution to the public upon request.

b. Notice of the proposed decision shall identify the parties; specify the terms of the proposed decision; list the names, addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses of the parties or their authorized representatives to whom inquiries by the public should be directed; and, further, state the date and method by which written objection to the proposed decision must be filed with the agency.

c. Objections to the proposed decision must be electronically filed with the agency by the date posted in the notice of proposed decision. Objections shall set out the specific grounds of objection. The objecting party must identify itself and provide a mailing address, telephone number, and email address, if available. The agency shall promptly advise the parties of the objections and make any investigation

deemed appropriate. If the agency deems the objections to be of substance, the parties may, with agency approval, amend their proposed decision to conform therewith, and the objecting party shall be notified by the agency of the amendment. If the objections cannot be informally resolved, they may be dismissed or resolved at hearing.

d. Final board decision on the informal settlement shall be reserved until expiration of the time for filing of objections. If no objections have been filed; or if filed objections have been resolved through amendment of the proposed decision; or if filed objections, after inquiry by the board, were found to be frivolous, the board shall endorse the proposed decision as final.

e. If interested parties are unable to informally settle a case on bargaining unit determination within 15 days of service of a petition, the board or administrative law judge may order any interested party to file its proposed unit description.

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