

701—7.45 (17A) Answer. The department may, in lieu of findings, file an answer. When findings are issued, the department will file an answer within 30 days of receipt of written notification from protester stating disagreement with the findings. The answer shall be filed with the clerk of the hearings section for the department.

In the event that the protester does not so respond in writing to the findings issued on matters covered by subrule 7.44(1) within 30 days after being notified, the department may seek dismissal of the protest pursuant to subrule 7.44(2).

The answer of the department shall be drawn in a manner as provided by the Iowa Rules of Civil Procedure for answers filed in Iowa district courts.

Each paragraph contained in the answer shall be numbered or lettered to correspond, where possible, with the paragraphs of the protest. An original copy only of the answer shall be filed with the clerk of the hearings section for the department and shall be signed by the department's counsel or representative.

The department shall forthwith serve a copy of the answer upon the representative of record or, if there is no representative of record, then upon the protester and shall file proof of service with the clerk of the hearings section of the department at the time of filing of the answer. The department may amend its answer at any time prior to the commencement of the evidentiary hearing.

The provisions of rule 701—7.45(17A) shall be considered as a part of the informal procedures since a contested case proceeding, at the time of filing the answer, has not yet commenced. However, an answer shall be filed pursuant to this rule whether or not informal procedures have been waived by the protester or the department.

Notwithstanding the above portions of this rule, if a taxpayer makes a written demand for a contested case proceeding, as authorized by rule 701—7.47(17A), after a period of six months from the filing of a proper protest, the department shall file its answer within 30 days after receipt of the demand. If the department fails to file its answer within this 30-day period, interest shall be suspended, if the protest involves an assessment, from the time that the department was required to answer until the date that the department files its answer and, if the protest involves a refund, interest shall accrue on the refund at double the rate from the time the department was required to answer until the date that the department files its answer.

The department's answer may contain a statement setting forth whether the case should be transferred to the division of administrative hearings or the director should retain the case for hearing.

The department's answer should set forth the basis for retention of the case by the director as provided in subrule 7.50(1). If the answer fails to allege that the case should be retained by the director, the case should be transferred to the division of administrative hearings for contested case proceedings, unless the director determines on the director's own motion that the case should be retained by the director.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code chapter 17A and Iowa Code sections 421.14 and 421.60.