

701—71.15 (441) Final equalization order and appeals.

71.15(1) Issuance of final equalization order. After the tentative equalization notice has been issued and an opportunity for a hearing described in rule 701—71.14(441) has been afforded, the department of revenue shall issue a final equalization order by mail to the county auditor. The order shall specify any percentage adjustments in the aggregate valuations of any class of property to be made effective for the county as of January 1 of the year in which the order is issued. The final equalization order shall be issued on or before October 1 unless for good cause it cannot be issued until after October 1. The final equalization order shall be implemented by the county auditor.

71.15(2) Appeal of final equalization order. The city or county officials of the affected county or assessing jurisdiction may appeal a final equalization order to the director of revenue by filing a notice of appeal with the clerk of the hearings section of the department of revenue. The notice of appeal must be filed or postmarked not later than ten days after the date the final equalization order is issued.

a. Form of appeal. The notice of appeal shall be in writing and in the same format as provided in 701—subrule 7.8(6).

(1) The notice of appeal shall substantially state in separate numbered paragraphs the following:

1. The county or assessing jurisdiction;
2. The date on which the final equalization order was issued;
3. The portion of the equalization order being appealed;
4. A clear and concise assignment of each and every error;
5. A clear and concise statement of the facts upon which the affected county or assessing jurisdiction relies as sustaining the assignment of error;
6. The relief requested;
7. The signature of the city or county officials bringing the appeal, or their representative, along with the address to which all subsequent correspondence, notice or papers shall be served or mailed.

(2) A county or assessing jurisdiction may amend its notice of appeal at any time prior to the commencement of the evidentiary hearing. The department may request that the county or assessing jurisdiction amend the notice of appeal for clarification.

b. Filing of notice of appeal. The notice of appeal must either be delivered to the department by electronic means or by United States Postal Service or a common carrier, by ordinary, certified, or registered mail, directed to the attention of the clerk of the hearings section at P.O. Box 14457, Des Moines, Iowa 50319, or be personally delivered to the clerk of the hearings section or served on the clerk of the hearings section by personal service during business hours. For the purpose of mailing, a notice of appeal is considered filed on the date of the postmark. If a postmark date is not present on the mailed article, then the date of receipt of protest will be considered the date of mailing. Any document, including a notice of appeal, is considered filed on the date personal service or personal delivery to the office of the clerk of the hearings section is made. See Iowa Code section 622.105 for the evidence necessary to establish proof of mailing.

c. Answer. The department of revenue shall file an answer with the clerk of the hearings section within 30 days after the filing of the pleading responded to, unless attacked by motion as provided in 701—subrule 7.17(5), and then the answer shall be filed within 30 days after the date on which the fact finder issues a ruling on the motion. The department may amend its answer at any time prior to the commencement of the evidentiary hearing.

d. Docketing. Appeals shall be assigned a docket number as provided in rule 701—7.10(17A). Records consisting of the case name and the corresponding docket number assigned to the case must be maintained by the clerk of the hearings section. The records of each case shall also include each action and each act done, with the proper dates as follows:

- (1) The title of the appeal;

- (2) Brief statement of the date of the final equalization order, the property tax classification affected, and the relief sought;
- (3) The manner and time of service of notice of appeal;
- (4) The appearance of all parties;
- (5) Notice of hearing, together with manner and time of service; and
- (6) The decision of the director or administrative law judge or other disposition of the case and the date.

e. Hearing. Rules 701—7.14(17A) through 701—7.22(17A) shall apply to any hearing or proceeding regarding the appeal of a final equalization order to the director of revenue.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code chapter 17A and sections 441.48 and 441.49.

[ARC 2657C, IAB 8/3/16, effective 9/7/16]