

**441—7.16 (17A) The appeal decision.**

**7.16(1) Record.** The record in a contested case shall include, in addition to those materials specified in Iowa Code section 17A.12(6):

*a.* The notice of appeal.

*b.* All evidence received or considered and all other submissions, including the verbatim record of the hearing.

**7.16(2) Findings of fact.** Any party may submit proposed findings of fact. The presiding officer will rule on the proposed findings of fact. Findings of fact shall be based solely on the evidence in the record and on matters officially noticed in the record. The findings of fact and conclusions of law in the proposed or final decision shall be limited to contested issues of fact, policy, or law.

**7.16(3) Proposed decision.** Following the reception of evidence, the presiding officer shall issue a proposed decision, consisting of the issues of the appeal, the decision, the findings of fact and the conclusions of law. Each item shall be separately stated under individual headings. The proposed decision shall be mailed by first-class mail, postage prepaid, addressed to the appellant at the appellant's last-known address.

**7.16(4) Appeal of the proposed decision.** After issuing a proposed decision, the administrative law judge shall submit it to the department with copies to the appeals advisory committee.

*a.* The appellant, appellant's representative, a subject allowed to intervene as specified in subrule 7.5(4), the representative of a subject allowed to intervene as specified in subrule 7.5(4), or the department may appeal for the director's review of the proposed decision.

*b.* When the appellant, a subject allowed to intervene as specified in subrule 7.5(4), or the department has not appealed the proposed decision or when an appeal for the director's review of the proposed decision is not granted, the proposed decision shall become the final decision.

*c.* The director's review on appeal of the proposed decision shall be on the basis of the record as defined in subrule 7.16(1), except that the director need not listen to the verbatim record of the hearing in a review or appeal. The review or appeal shall be limited to issues raised prior to that time and specified by the party requesting the appeal or review. The director may designate another to act on the director's behalf in making final decisions.

**7.16(5) Time limit for appeal of a proposed decision.** Appeal for the director's review of the proposed decision must be made in writing to the director and postmarked or date-stamped within ten calendar days of the date on which the proposed decision was signed and mailed. The day after the proposed decision is mailed is the first day of the time period within which a request for review must be filed. When the time limit for filing falls on a holiday or a weekend, the time will be extended to the next workday.

**7.16(6) Appeal of the proposed decision by the department.** The appeals advisory committee acts as an initial screening device for the director and may recommend that the director review a proposed decision. That recommendation is not binding upon the director, and the director may decide to review a proposed decision without that committee's recommendation.

When the director grants a review of a proposed decision on the department's request the appeals section shall notify all other parties to the appeal of the review and send a copy of the request to all other parties. All other parties shall be provided ten calendar days from the date of notification to submit further written arguments or objections for consideration upon review.

The day after the notification is mailed is the first day of the time period within which a response to the department's request for review must be filed. When the time limit for responding falls on a holiday or a weekend, the time will be extended to the next workday.

**7.16(7) Appeal of the proposed decision by the appellant.** When the director grants a review of a proposed decision all other parties shall be so notified.

**7.16(8) Opportunity for oral presentation of appeal of the proposed decision.** In cases where there is an appeal of a proposed decision each party shall be afforded an opportunity to present oral arguments with the consent of the director. Any party wishing oral argument shall specifically request it. When granted, all parties shall be notified of the time and place.

**7.16(9) *Time limits.*** A final decision on the appeal shall be issued within 90 days from the date of the appeal on all decisions except food assistance and vendors. Food assistance-only decisions shall be rendered in 60 days. PROMISE JOBS displacement grievance decisions shall be rendered within 90 days from the date the displacement grievance was filed with the PROMISE JOBS contractee. Failure to reach a decision within these time frames shall not affect the merits of the appellant's appeal.

*a.* Time frames may be extended based on continuances or additional time frames as approved by the presiding officer. Should the appellant request a delay in the hearing in order to prepare the case or for other essential reasons, reasonable time, not to exceed 30 days except with the approval of the administrative law judge, shall be granted and the extra time shall be added to the maximum for final administrative action.

*b.* For an appeal regarding child abuse, if the proposed decision is not appealed within 10 days from the date of the proposed decision, the proposed decision shall be the final agency action. If a party files an appeal within 10 days from the date of the proposed decision, the director has 45 days from the date of the proposed decision to issue a ruling. If the director does not rule within that 45-day period, the proposed decision becomes the final decision as provided in Iowa Code section 235A.19.

*c.* The department shall take prompt, definite and final administrative action to carry out the decision rendered within seven calendar days of receipt of a copy of the final decision. When the final decision is favorable to the appellant, or when the department decides in favor of the appellant before the hearing, the department shall make any additional corrective payments due, retroactive to the date of the incorrect action.

**7.16(10) *Final decision.*** The department shall mail the final decision to the appellant at the appellant's last-known address by first-class mail, postage prepaid.

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