

**17A.12 Contested cases — notice — hearing — records.**

1. In a contested case, all parties shall be afforded an opportunity for hearing after reasonable notice in writing delivered either by personal service as in civil actions or by certified mail return receipt requested. However, an agency may provide by rule for the delivery of such notice by other means. Delivery of the notice referred to in [this subsection](#) shall constitute commencement of the contested case proceeding.

2. The notice shall include:

- a. A statement of the time, place, and nature of the hearing.
- b. A statement of the legal authority and jurisdiction under which the hearing is to be held.
- c. A reference to the particular sections of the statutes and rules involved.

d. A short and plain statement of the matters asserted. If the agency or other party is unable to state the matters in detail at the time the notice is served, the initial notice may be limited to a statement of the issues involved. Thereafter upon application a more definite and detailed statement shall be furnished.

3. If a party fails to appear or participate in a contested case proceeding after proper service of notice, the presiding officer may, if no adjournment is granted, enter a default decision or proceed with the hearing and make a decision in the absence of the party. The parties shall be duly notified of the decision, together with the presiding officer's reasons for the decision, which is the final decision of the agency, unless within fifteen days, or such period of time as otherwise specified by statute or rule, after the date of notification or mailing of the decision, further appeal is initiated. If a decision is rendered against a party who failed to appear for the hearing and the presiding officer is timely requested by that party to vacate the decision for good cause, the time for initiating a further appeal is stayed pending a determination by the presiding officer to grant or deny the request. If adequate reasons are provided showing good cause for the party's failure to appear, the presiding officer shall vacate the decision and, after proper service of notice, conduct another evidentiary hearing. If adequate reasons are not provided showing good cause for the party's failure to appear, the presiding officer shall deny the motion to vacate.

4. Opportunity shall be afforded all parties to respond and present evidence and argument on all issues involved and to be represented by counsel at their own expense.

5. Unless precluded by statute, informal disposition may be made of any contested case by stipulation, agreed settlement, consent order or default or by another method agreed upon by the parties in writing.

6. The record in a contested case shall include:

- a. All pleadings, motions, and intermediate rulings.
- b. All evidence received or considered and all other submissions.
- c. A statement of all matters officially noticed.
- d. All questions and offers of proof, objections, and rulings thereon.
- e. All proposed findings and exceptions.
- f. Any decision, opinion, or report by the officer presiding at the hearing.

7. Oral proceedings shall be open to the public and shall be recorded either by mechanized means or by certified shorthand reporters. Oral proceedings or any part thereof shall be transcribed at the request of any party with the expense of the transcription charged to the requesting party. The recording or stenographic notes of oral proceedings or the transcription thereof shall be filed with and maintained by the agency for at least five years from the date of decision.

8. Findings of fact shall be based solely on the evidence in the record and on matters officially noticed in the record.

9. Unless otherwise provided by statute, a person's request or demand for a contested case proceeding shall be in writing, delivered to the agency by United States postal service or personal service and shall be considered as filed with the agency on the date of the United States postal service postmark or the date personal service is made.

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §17A.12]

[87 Acts, ch 71, §1](#); [98 Acts, ch 1202, §16, 46](#)

Referred to in [§17A.9](#), [§17A.13](#), [§17A.16](#), [§68B.31](#), [§86.19](#), [§96.11](#), [§147A.5](#), [§147A.17](#), [§169.5](#), [§217.30](#), [§321.556](#), [§421.17](#), [§476A.4](#)  
Interpreters in legal proceedings, chapters 622A, 622B