

**501—6.5(80B,17A) Presiding officer.**

**6.5(1)** The presiding officer assigned to render a proposed decision will be an administrative law judge employed by the Iowa department of inspections and appeals. However, the council in its discretion may elect to preside over a case in lieu of an administrative law judge.

**6.5(2)** Any party who wishes to request that the presiding officer assigned to render a proposed decision be an administrative law judge employed by the Iowa department of inspections and appeals must file a written request within 20 days after service of a notice of hearing which identifies or describes the presiding officer as the council.

**6.5(3)** The council may deny the request only upon a finding that one or more of the following apply:

*a.* Neither the council nor any officer of the council under whose authority the contested case is to take place is a named party to the proceeding or a real party in interest to that proceeding.

*b.* There is a compelling need to expedite issuance of a final decision in order to protect the public health, safety, or welfare.

*c.* An administrative law judge is unavailable to hear the case within a reasonable time.

*d.* The case involves significant policy issues of first impression that are inextricably intertwined with the factual issues presented.

*e.* The demeanor of the witnesses is likely to be dispositive in resolving the disputed factual issues.

*f.* Funds are unavailable to pay the costs of an administrative law judge and an interagency appeal.

*g.* The request was not timely filed.

*h.* The request is not consistent with a specified statute.

**6.5(4)** The council shall issue a written ruling specifying the grounds for its decision within 20 days after a request for an administrative law judge is filed. If the ruling is contingent upon the availability of an administrative law judge, the parties shall be notified at least ten days prior to hearing if a qualified administrative law judge will not be available.

**6.5(5)** Unless otherwise provided by law, all rulings by an administrative law judge acting as presiding officer are subject to appeal to the council. A party must seek any available intra-agency appeal in order to exhaust adequate administrative remedies.

**6.5(6)** Unless otherwise provided by law, the council, when reviewing a proposed decision upon intra-agency appeal, shall have the powers of and shall comply with the provisions of this chapter which apply to presiding officers.

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