

Chapter NR 2

PROCEDURE AND PRACTICE

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Note: Chapter WCD 2 as it existed on March 31, 1973 was repealed, and a new chapter NR 2 was created, Register, March, 1973, No. 207, effective April 1, 1973.

NR 2.01 Application of rules. This chapter shall apply in all proceedings and hearings before the department except as specifically provided otherwise.

History: Cr. Register, March, 1973, No. 207, eff. 4-1-73; CR 02-046: am. Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.02 Definitions. In this chapter:

(1) “Administrative law judge” means a hearing examiner employed by the department of administration division of hearings and appeals.

(2) “Class 1 proceeding” has the meaning specified in s. 227.01 (3) (a), Stats.

(3) “Class 2 proceeding” has the meaning specified in s. 227.01 (3) (b), Stats.

(4) “Class 3 proceeding” has the meaning specified in s. 227.01 (3) (c), Stats.

(5) “Contested case” has the meaning specified in s. 227.01 (intro.), Stats.

(6) “Department” means the department of natural resources.

(7) “Division of hearing and appeals” means the department of administration division of hearings and appeals.

(8) “Noncontested case hearing” means any hearing before the department which is not a contested case hearing.

(9) “Secretary” means the secretary of the department.

History: Cr. Register, March, 1973, No. 207, eff. 4-1-73; r. and recr. (3) and cr. (4), Register, March, 1984, No. 339, eff. 4-1-84; CR 02-046: renum. and am. (1) to (4) to be (6), (9), (5) and (8), cr. (1), (4) and (7) Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.03 Service on the department. All petitions for hearings, petitions for rules, petitions for declaratory rulings, petitions for review of contested case decisions under s. NR 2.20, answers and complaints required by any statute or rule shall be served on the department by personal delivery to the office of the secretary, by mailing to the secretary by certified mail, at the following address: P. O. Box 7921, Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7921.

Note: *In re Proposed Incorporation of Pewaukee*, 72 Wis. 2d 593 (1976) and *Schroedel Corp. v. State Highway Commission*, 192 Wis. 2d 424 (1968) indicate that when service by mail is authorized, and in the absence of specific language to the contrary, service is complete upon timely mailing. This rule is intended to specify that service is complete upon receipt by the department.

Note: The office of the secretary is located at 101 S. Webster St., 8th floor, Madison, WI.

History: Cr. Register, March, 1973, No. 207, eff. 4-1-73; am. Register, March, 1978, No. 267, eff. 4-1-78; CR 02-046: am. Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04; correction made under 13.92 (4) (b) 6., Stats., Register February 2019 No. 758.

NR 2.04 Service of pleadings. After a matter has been set for a contested case hearing, all pleadings and papers shall be served on the division of hearings and appeals, the department’s bureau of legal services and all identified parties. Unless otherwise provided for by the division of hearings and appeals, service shall be made by personal delivery or by mailing. Service by mail shall be complete on mailing.

Note: How service of pleadings is accomplished under s. NR 2.04 differs from how service of petitions is accomplished under s. NR 2.03.

Note: The Division of Hearings and Appeals is located at 4822 Madison Yards Way, Madison, WI 53705. The department’s Bureau of Legal Services is located at 101 S. Webster St., 8th floor, Madison, WI, mailing address: Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707.

History: Cr. Register, March, 1973, No. 207, eff. 4-1-73; am. Register, March, 1978, No. 267, eff. 4-1-78; am. Register, March, 1984, No. 339, eff. 4-1-84; CR 02-046: am. Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.05 Forms of petitions. Petitions shall conform with the applicable statute as to form, content, number of signatories and verifications. All petitions shall be served within the time specified by statute or administrative rule, or, where no time is specified, within 30 days of the date of the order or decision to be reviewed. The department may request additional information concerning any petition or request served under this section. The department may deny any petition or request where the information required or requested under this section is not provided. Forms of petitions in various proceedings shall follow the following formats:

(1) **REVIEW OF ORDERS.** The following form shall be used in seeking review of orders issued pursuant to ss. 281.19 (2) (a), (4), (5), 285.13 (2), 285.83 (1), 289.97 (1), 291.95 (1), 292.11 (4) and (7) (c), 293.15 (3) and 293.83 (1), Stats.

To the Department of Natural Resources:

The undersigned hereby petitions for a review of the department order dated _____, 20____, whereby it was ordered _____.

The grounds for this petition are _____

The modification or change desired is _____

Date _____

Signature _____

Verification _____

(2) PROMULGATION, REPEAL OR AMENDMENT OF RULES OF THE DEPARTMENT. The following form shall be used in petitioning for rules pursuant to s. 227.12, Stats.

(a) For promulgation of a rule:

To the Department of Natural Resources:

The undersigned hereby petitions for the promulgation of a rule relating to: _____

The grounds for this petition are _____

The petitioners' interest in the request is _____

The authority of the department to act is _____

Date _____

Signatures (*5 needed unless petitioner is a municipality or an association which is representative of a farm, labor, business or professional group*) _____

(b) For amendment of a rule:

To the Department of Natural Resources:

The undersigned hereby petitions for the amendment of rule number _____ which provides as follows: _____

The grounds for this petition are _____

The modification or change desired is _____

The petitioners' interest in the request is _____

Date _____

Signatures (*5 needed unless petitioner is a municipality or an association which is representative of a farm, labor, business or professional group*) _____

(3) DECLARATORY RULINGS. The following form shall be used in petitioning for declaratory rulings pursuant to s. 227.41, Stats.

To the Department of Natural Resources:

In the matter of the applicability of the following statute or rule _____

The statute or rule provides as follows: _____

The grounds for this petition are to determine the applicability of the above provision because of the following state of facts: _____

The reasons for the requested ruling are _____

The following are the names and addresses of all other persons other than the petitioner upon whom it is sought to make the ruling binding: _____

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

Signature _____

Verification _____

(4) SIX CITIZEN COMPLAINTS. The complaint and answer in the proceeding shall conform with the requirements of the applicable provisions of ch. 802, Stats. The following form shall be used in filing 6 citizen complaints pursuant to s. 299.91, Stats.;

To the Department of Natural Resources:

(Name) (Address)

is causing or will cause alleged or potential environmental pollution, caused by the activities described herein:

The facts supporting the contention that alleged or potential environmental pollution is or will take place are as follows:

The nature of the alleged or potential environmental pollution is:

The specific relief sought by the complainants is:

Name and address of a person within the state authorized to receive service of the answer and other papers on behalf of the complainants:

(Name) (Address)

Signatures of 6 or more citizens Verifications

(5) HEARINGS UNDER S. 227.42, STATS. The request for a hearing to be treated as a contested case under s. 227.42, Stats., shall be in writing, and served upon the secretary within 30 days after the department action or inaction complained of, or within the time specified by the statute or administrative rule which accords a right to a hearing. The following form shall be used in requesting a hearing under s. 227.42, Stats.

To the Department of Natural Resources:

The undersigned hereby requests that a hearing be held as a contested case under s. 227.42, Stats.

The agency action or inaction which is the basis for the request for a hearing is: _____

The substantial interest injured or threatened with injury by agency action or inaction is: _____

The basis for a finding that there is no evidence of legislative intent that the interest is not to be protected is: _____

The injury to the person requesting the hearing is different in kind or degree from injury to the general public caused by the agency action or inaction because: _____

There is a dispute of material fact, and the disputed facts are:

The statute or administrative rule other than s. 227.42, Stats., if any, which accords a right to a hearing is: _____

(Signature)

(Address)

History: Cr. Register, March, 1973, No. 207, eff. 4-1-73; am. (intro), (1), (2) and (3), r. and recr. (4), cr. (5), Register, March, 1984, No. 339, eff. 4-1-84; correction in (2) (intro.), (3) and (5) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, January, 1987, No. 373; corrections in (1) and (4) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, October, 1999, No. 526; CR 02-046: am. (intro.), (1), (2), (3), and (5) Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.055 Determination of jurisdiction. After receipt of a petition for a contested case hearing, the department shall determine whether the petition meets the jurisdictional requirements of the statutes and rules under which the petition is filed. The department shall transmit to the division of hearings and appeals under s. 227.43, Stats., only petitions or portions thereof which the department determines meet the applicable jurisdictional requirements.

History: CR 02-046: cr. Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.06 Notice of hearing. (1) FORM. Notice of hearing shall be in writing, with a title identifying the matter set for hearing, and where appropriate, contain a docket number.

(2) CONTENT. The notice of hearing shall contain the following information:

- (a) Date, time and location of the hearing.
- (b) The statutory authority for the hearing.
- (c) A short summary of the matter to be considered.

(d) Other information as the department or the administrative law judge may deem appropriate.

(3) SERVICE. Except as otherwise specifically required, service of notice of hearing may be made by personal delivery or by mailing a copy thereof to the last known post office address of the person to be served in a sealed envelope with first class postage prepaid thereon and shall be deemed to have been served upon deposit thereof in the U.S. mails. The department may require service of notice of hearing by registered or certified mail or by publication when deemed appropriate and consistent with the requirements of s. 227.44 (1), Stats.

History: Cr. Register, March, 1973, No. 207, eff. 4-1-73; am. (2) (d), Register, March, 1984, No. 339, eff. 4-1-84; CR 02-046: am. (1), (2) (d) and (3) Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.065 Contested case designation. (1) Except as provided in sub. (2) or unless otherwise determined by the department or administrative law judge, all department contested case hearings are class 1 proceedings under s. 227.01 (3), Stats.

(2) Hearings held under ss. 30.03, 281.17 (3) and (5), 281.19, 281.20, 285.83 (1), 289.95, 289.97 (1), 291.87, 291.89, 291.95 (1), 292.11 (4) and (7) (c), 293.15 (3), 293.83, and 299.21, Stats., and hearings which revoke or suspend a department-issued license as defined in s. 227.01 (5), Stats., are class 2 proceedings.

History: Emerg. cr. eff. 11-1-76; cr. Register, March, 1977, No. 255, eff. 4-1-77; am. Register, March, 1984, No. 339, eff. 4-1-84; correction in (2) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, January, 1987, No. 373; corrections made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, October, 1999, No. 526; CR 02-046: am. Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.07 Place of hearings. Unless otherwise specifically provided by law, all contested case hearings shall be held at the offices of the division of hearings and appeals, or at the time, date and place designated by the administrative law judge in the hearing notice.

Note: The offices of the Division of Hearings and Appeals are located at 4822 Madison Yards Way, Madison, WI.

History: Cr. Register, March, 1973, No. 207, eff. 4-1-73; am. Register, March, 1984, No. 339, eff. 4-1-84; CR 02-046: am. Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.08 Persons entitled to participate in contested case hearings. (1) In addition to the parties, any

member of the public may participate in any department contested case hearing.

(2) Any person desiring to participate in a department contested case hearing, whether on his or her own behalf or as an authorized agent or attorney, shall enter an appearance in person by giving his or her name and address, the name and address of any person being represented, and the capacity in which he or she is representing the person. A person may enter his or her appearance either prior to or at the commencement of a contested case hearing.

(4) Any documents concerning a contested case hearing filed with the department or the administrative law judge prior to issuance of a final decision in the case shall be served by the person filing the documents on all persons who are identified as parties under sub. (6).

(5) The department or the administrative law judge may require persons who wish to be parties to a contested case hearing to attend a prehearing conference. In such a circumstance, the notice of the prehearing conference shall be published in the same manner as is required for notice of hearing. If the notice of hearing is not required to be published, the administrative law judge may cause to be published a notice of the prehearing conference as a class 1 notice under ch. 985, Stats., in the official newspaper designated under s. 985.04 or 985.05, Stats., or, if none exists, in a newspaper likely to give notice in the area affected. The department or the administrative law judge may, under sub. (6) identify parties at a prehearing conference. One notice may be used for both the prehearing conference and the hearing.

(6) The department or the administrative law judge shall identify and maintain a list of persons who are recognized as parties to the contested case hearing. A person does not need to be represented by legal counsel to be a party to or participate in a contested case hearing. This list may be adjusted by the department or the administrative law judge as necessary through the course of the hearing. The list of parties required by s. NR 2.155 (3), for purposes of review under s. 227.53, Stats., may differ from the list required by this section.

(7) Persons listed as parties under s. 227.47, Stats., and s. NR 2.155 (3), shall be served with exhibits, pleadings, correspondence and other documents submitted by parties after issuance of the decision, including those documents specified in ss. 227.44 (7), 227.49 and 227.50 (2), Stats. The persons shall also be served with petitions for judicial review.

History: Cr. Register, March, 1973, No. 207, eff. 4-1-73; am. (2), Register, July, 1978, No. 271, eff. 8-1-78; r. and recr. Register, March, 1984, No. 339, eff. 4-1-84; correction in (6) (intro.) and (7) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, January, 1987, No. 373; CR 02-046, am. (1), (2), (4), (5), (6) and (7), r. (3), and (6) (a) to (c) Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.085 Environmental impact statements. (1) When an environmental impact statement has been prepared on a proposed action for which a contested case hearing is held, all evidence regarding compliance with s. 1.11, Stats., shall be taken at that hearing unless otherwise provided by statute.

(2) In the absence of specific authority for a contested case hearing on a proposed action for which an environmental impact statement has been prepared, a contested case hearing shall be held on the proposed action if a petition for a hearing meeting the requirements of s. 227.42, Stats., is received by the department unless otherwise provided by statute.

(3) If a contested case hearing will be held on a proposed action for which an environmental impact statement has been prepared, the informational hearing provided for by s. NR 150.30 (3) (d) shall be combined with the contested case hearing if circum-

stances and statutes allow. At a combined hearing, the informational portion shall precede the contested portion.

History: Cr. Register, June, 1985, No. 354, eff. 7-1-85; am. Register, January, 1987, No. 373, eff. 2-1-87; CR 02-046: am. Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04; CR 13-022: am. (3), r. (4) Register March 2014 No. 699, eff. 4-1-14.

NR 2.09 Changes in time or place of hearing; adjournments; failures to appear. (1) **CHANGES.** Requests for changes in the time or place of a scheduled hearing may be granted by the department or administrative law judge only for good cause shown. A request received after a required newspaper publication or legal notice may be rescheduled only if the person requesting the change bears the cost of republication of the notice and the administrative law judge deems the change appropriate under the circumstances presented.

(2) **ADJOURNMENT.** The department or the administrative law judge may adjourn a hearing for good cause shown, the hearing to be reset or reconvened at the discretion of the department or the administrative law judge or at a time and place set by the department or the administrative law judge on the record of the hearing prior to adjournment.

(3) **FAILURE TO APPEAR.** (a) If an applicant for a permit or license fails to appear at a hearing following due notice, the department or the administrative law judge may dismiss the application unless the applicant shows good cause for the failure to appear. If an applicant fails to submit proof of publication and notice as required by statute, the department or the administrative law judge may dismiss the application and cancel the hearing.

(b) If a respondent in an enforcement proceeding fails to appear, the department or the administrative law judge shall take testimony and issue, modify or rescind the order as may be appropriate.

(c) If a petitioner in a proceeding fails to appear, the department or the administrative law judge may dismiss the petition unless the petitioner shows good cause for the failure to appear.

History: Cr. Register, March, 1973, No. 207, eff. 4-1-73; am. (2) and (3), cr. (3) (c), Register, March, 1984, No. 339, eff. 4-1-84; CR 02-046: am. Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.095 Declaratory ruling hearings. When a petition for a declaratory ruling is granted under s. 227.41, Stats., the hearing shall be conducted as a noncontested case. The declaratory ruling may be based upon information presented at the hearing and other information available to the department to assist in rendering the declaratory ruling.

History: CR 02-046: cr. Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.10 Witnesses and subpoenas in contested cases. The department, the administrative law judge, on the judge's own motion or at the request of a party, or any attorney of record for a party in a contested case hearing may issue subpoenas to compel the attendance of witnesses at contested case hearings or discovery proceedings under s. NR 2.11. A subpoena requiring the production of documents may be issued if the person issuing the subpoena specifies the documents to be presented by the subpoenaed witness. Sections 814.67, 885.06 and 885.07, Stats., shall govern the payment of witness fees and expenses. For good cause shown, the administrative law judge may issue orders to protect persons or parties from annoyance, embarrassment, oppression or undue burden, as provided in s. 804.01 (3), Stats.

History: Cr. Register, March, 1973, No. 207, eff. 4-1-73; am. Register, March, 1984, No. 339, eff. 4-1-84; CR 02-046: am. Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.11 Preservation of testimony and discovery of evidence in contested case hearings. (1) **DISCOVERY IN CLASS 2 PROCEEDINGS.** The department or any party in a class

2 proceeding may obtain prehearing discovery and preserve testimony as provided under ch. 804, Stats. For good cause, the administrative law judge may allow a shorter or longer time for discovery or preserving testimony than is allowed by ch. 804, Stats. For good cause shown, the administrative law judge may issue orders to protect persons or parties from annoyance, embarrassment, oppression or undue burden, as provided in s. 804.01 (3), Stats. The administrative law judge may issue orders to compel discovery.

(2) **DISCOVERY IN CLASS 1 AND 3 PROCEEDINGS.** For good cause shown, the department or the administrative law judge may allow prehearing discovery and the preservation of evidence in any class 1 proceeding or class 3 proceeding as provided under ch. 804, Stats. Any order allowing discovery or the preservation of evidence may include any reasonable limitations on the scope and extent of discovery as the department or the administrative law judge deems appropriate under the circumstances. In class 1 proceedings and class 3 proceedings, the taking and preservation of evidence shall be permitted with respect to a witness in any of the following:

(a) Who is beyond reach of a subpoena for the hearing.

(b) Who is about to go out of the state, not intending to return in time for the hearing.

(c) Who is so sick, infirm or aged as to make it probable that the witness will not be able to attend the hearing.

(d) Who is a member of the legislature, if any committee of the same or the house of which the witness is a member is in session, provided the witness waives his or her privilege.

(3) **COMPLETION OF DISCOVERY.** In all contested cases, all discovery shall be completed at least 7 days prior to the date on which the hearing is scheduled to begin, unless otherwise agreed by the parties or ordered by the department or the administrative law judge.

History: Cr. Register, March, 1973, No. 207, eff. 4-1-73; am. Register, April, 1976, No. 244, eff. 5-1-76; am. Register, March 1978, No. 267, eff. 4-1-78; am. Register, March, 1984, No. 339, eff. 4-1-84; CR 02-046: renum. and am. (intro) to be (1), cr. (2) and (3) Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.115 Alternative dispute resolution. (1) **ALTERNATIVE SETTLEMENT RECOMMENDED.** The administrative law judge or the department may, with or without a motion having been filed, upon determining that an action or proceeding is an appropriate one in which to consider a settlement alternative, recommend that the parties select a settlement alternative under s. 802.12, Stats., as a means to attempt settlement. Unless all parties consent, the pursuit of settlement alternatives may not delay the setting of the hearing date or other matters addressed in any scheduling order or conference.

(2) **ADMISSIBILITY.** Except for binding arbitration, all settlement alternatives are compromise negotiations for purposes of s. 904.08, Stats., and mediation for purposes of s. 904.085, Stats., and are not admissible in contested case hearings conducted under this chapter.

History: CR 02-046: cr. Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.12 Informal conferences, prehearing conferences and motions. (1) **CALL AND PURPOSE.** The department or the administrative law judge may call an informal conference or prehearing conference at any time prior to or during the course of a hearing, and may require the attendance of all persons who are or wish to be parties to the proceeding, under s. NR 2.08. The purposes of the conferences shall be to consider, insofar as applicable:

(a) Clarification of issues.

(b) Amendments to the pleadings.

(c) Admissibility of evidence.

(d) The possibility of obtaining admissions or stipulations of fact and of documents which will avoid unnecessary proof.

(e) The identification of witnesses and limitation of the number of witnesses.

(f) The identification of all parties to the proceeding.

(g) The scope and conduct of prehearing discovery.

(h) The exchange of exhibits by all parties prior to the hearing.

(i) Filing of prehearing motions.

(j) Other matters as may aid in the disposition of the matter.

(2) **RECORDING STIPULATIONS.** The administrative law judge shall record any stipulations made at the conference, which the judge intends shall bind the parties in the proceedings.

(3) **PREHEARING MOTIONS.** All motions, notices of motions, and any supporting papers which can reasonably be made prior to the hearing shall be served upon all parties and filed with the administrative law judge at least 7 days prior to the date on which the hearing is scheduled to begin, unless otherwise ordered by the department or the administrative law judge.

(4) **DECISION ON BRIEFS.** If an informal conference is held and the parties agree that there is no material dispute of fact raised by the pleadings, the administrative law judge or department may cancel the hearing and may decide the matter on the basis of briefs submitted by the parties.

History: Cr. Register, March, 1973, No. 207, eff. 4-1-73; am. (1) and cr. (3), Register, March, 1984, No. 339, eff. 4-1-84; CR 02-046: am. (1) and (2), renum. and am. (3) to be (4), cr. (3) Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.13 Conduct of contested case hearings. (1)

PROCEDURE. The administrative law judge shall open the hearing and make a concise statement of its scope and purposes. Appearances shall be entered on the record. The administrative law judge then shall state the issues in the proceedings. Thereafter, parties may make opening statements. Persons who are not identified as parties by the department or the administrative law judge at any prehearing conference for which notice was provided under s. NR 2.08 (5) may participate in the contested case hearing but may not examine or cross examine witnesses at the hearing unless otherwise ordered by the department or the administrative law judge.

(2) **OPENING STATEMENTS.** When opening statements are made they shall be confined to:

(a) A brief summary or outline in clear and concise form of the evidence intended to be offered; and

(b) A statement of ultimate legal points relied upon.

(3) **ORDER OF PROCEEDING AND BURDEN OF PROOF.** Unless otherwise ordered by the administrative law judge:

(a) In proceedings where the department has issued an order or proposed order and the order recipient requests a hearing on the matter, the department shall proceed first with the presentation of evidence and shall have the burden of proof.

(b) In proceedings in which a person has been granted a review hearing under s. 227.42, 283.63 or 285.81, Stats., or in which persons have filed a complaint under s. 299.91, Stats., those persons shall proceed first with the presentation of evidence and shall have the burden of proof.

(c) Notwithstanding par. (b), in a de novo proceeding under a statute other than s. 283.63, 285.81 or 299.91, Stats., involving issuance of a license, permit or approval, the applicant for the license, permit or approval shall proceed first with the presentation of evidence and shall have the burden of proof.

(d) In all other proceedings not identified in pars. (a) to (c),

the administrative law judge shall determine the order of proceeding and who has the burden of proof.

(4) **OFF RECORD.** Proceedings may be conducted off the record only when the administrative law judge permits. If a discussion off the record is deemed pertinent by the administrative law judge, the judge may summarize it on the record.

(5) **OBJECTIONS TO EVIDENCE.** Any argument before the administrative law judge on objections to receipt of evidence or on motions to strike will be recorded and parties will be afforded the opportunity to make an offer of proof.

(6) **CONTEMPT.** Contemptuous conduct at a hearing may be grounds for exclusion from the hearing or such other remedy as the administrative law judge shall impose by law.

History: Cr. Register, March, 1973, No. 207, eff. 4-1-73; r. and recr. (3), Register, June, 1979, No. 282, eff. 7-1-79; am. (1), r. and recr. (3), Register, March, 1984, No. 339, eff. 4-1-84; correction in (3) (b) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, January, 1987, No. 373; correction in (3) (b) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, October, 1999, No. 526; CR 02-046: am. (1), (3) (b), and (4) to (6), cr. (3) (intro.), (c) and (d) Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.135 Conduct of noncontested case hearings.

(1) **NOTICE.** At least 10 days notice shall be given of the time, date and place of a noncontested case hearing.

(2) **PROCEDURE.** (a) The presiding officer will open the hearing and make a concise statement of its scope and purposes. Appearances may be entered on the record. Any person may participate in any department noncontested case hearing. Any person desiring to participate in a department noncontested case hearing, whether on his or her own behalf or as an authorized agent or attorney, shall enter an appearance in person by giving his or her name and address, the name and address of any person being represented, and the capacity in which he or she is representing the person. The hearing may be recorded by use of an electronic recording device.

(b) Persons entering an appearance may make statements, offer evidence or ask questions concerning the matter being heard. Statements need not be made under oath unless required by the department. Cross-examination of those who speak is not permitted, but clarifying questions of those who speak may be allowed by the presiding officer. The presiding officer shall determine the order in which people may speak, and may continue the hearing on another date or limit the length of the presentations if it appears there will not be enough time for all who wish to speak, or if the presentations are unduly repetitious.

(c) Statements may be submitted in oral or written form. Any person may submit a written statement within the time period allowed by the presiding officer.

(4) **TRANSCRIPTS.** Typed transcripts of noncontested case hearings will be prepared upon request and receipt of payment. The person requesting the transcript is responsible for all reasonable costs incurred by the department in transcribing the record and preparing the transcript. If more than one person requests a transcript, the department may divide the costs of preparation equally among all such persons. In lieu of a typed transcript, the department may provide any person requesting a transcript with a copy of the tape recording of the hearing, or other record if not recorded on an electronic recording device, upon payment of a reasonable fee.

(5) **APPLICABILITY.** The procedures in this section govern all noncontested case hearings held by the department, except rules hearings, which shall be conducted in accordance with s. 227.18, Stats. This section is applicable to hearings on environmental impact statements, unless it conflicts with the requirements of s. NR 2.085 or ch. NR 150.

History: Cr. Register, March, 1984, No. 339, eff. 4-1-84; corrections in (3) (intro.) and (5) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, January, 1987, No.

373; correction in (3) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 1., Stats., Register, October, 1999, No. 526; CR 02-046: am. (2) (a) and (b) and (5), r. (3) Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.14 Rules of evidence in contested cases. (1) RULES. Rules of evidence in contested cases are governed by s. 227.45, Stats.

(2) **ADMISSIBILITY.** Evidence submitted at the time of hearing need not be limited to matters set forth in pleadings, petitions or applications. If variances of this nature occur, then the pleadings, petitions or applications shall be considered amended by the record. The administrative law judge may grant continuances as may be necessary to give other parties adequate time to prepare evidence to rebut that involved in any variances.

(3) **TECHNICAL DATA.** When evidence to be presented consists of technical figures so numerous as to make oral presentation difficult to follow, it may be presented in exhibit form and supplemented and explained by oral testimony.

(4) **PETITIONS.** Petitions or written communications not admissible as evidence may be filed with the administrative law judge but will not be part of the record.

(5) **EXHIBITS.** Parties offering documentary exhibits or prepared testimony may be required by the administrative law judge to furnish copies to all other parties in advance of the hearings and to provide reasonable time as the administrative law judge may order to enable review of the prepared written testimony and exhibits. Upon compliance, written testimony and exhibits may be admitted in evidence as though given orally, providing the authors are present at the hearing and available for cross-examination.

(6) **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT.** An environmental impact statement and all comments received by the department on it prior to the contested case hearing shall be received into the record of the contested case hearing under ss. 908.03 (6) and (8) and 227.45, Stats. The environmental impact statement and comments received on it shall be considered along with hearing testimony in making a decision on the merits of the proposed action, and in making findings on compliance with s. 1.11, Stats. Testimony regarding the content of the environmental impact statement or cross-examination of persons responsible for specific portions of the environmental impact statement shall be allowed, except as otherwise provided by law. No person may use an environmental impact statement or any portion thereof as the exclusive means of meeting a burden of proof of any statutory requirements for an approval, license or permit in a contested proceeding except upon stipulation of the parties.

History: Cr. Register, March, 1973, No. 207, eff. 4-1-73; am. (1) and cr. (6), Register, March, 1984, No. 339, eff. 4-1-84; r. and recr. (6), Register, June, 1985, No. 354, eff. 7-1-85; am. (6), cr. (7), Register, January, 1987, No. 373, eff. 2-1-87; corrections in (1) made under s. 13.93, (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, January, 1987, No. 373; CR 02-046: am. (2) and (4) to (7) Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04; CR 13-022: r. (7) Register March 2014 No. 699, eff. 4-1-14.

NR 2.15 Close of hearing. (1) CLOSING AND BRIEFS. A hearing in a contested case shall be closed upon completion of the submission of all evidence and expiration of the period fixed for filing of briefs. If the time for filing briefs has expired and the brief of one or more parties is not filed within that time, the department or administrative law judge may proceed to the determination of the case. Extension of time to file briefs may be granted by the department or the administrative law judge upon good cause shown.

(2) **ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE.** If by stipulation of the parties, documentary evidence is permitted to be submitted after the close of testimony, the record will be closed when the documentary evidence is received by the department or when the specified time for furnishing it has elapsed without its being furnished.

The administrative law judge may, upon the request of the stipulating parties, extend the time as originally prescribed for filing the additional evidence.

History: Cr. Register, March, 1973, No. 207, eff. 4-1-73; am. (1) Register, March, 1984, No. 339, eff. 4-1-84; CR 02-046: am. Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.155 Decisions in contested cases. (1) ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE DECISION. The administrative law judge shall prepare findings of fact, conclusions of law and decision subsequent to each contested case heard. Unless the department petitions for judicial review as provided in s. 227.46 (8), Stats., the decision shall be the final decision of the department, but may be reviewed in the manner described in s. NR 2.20. Every decision shall include findings regarding compliance with the requirements of s. 1.11, Stats., to the extent compliance with s. 1.11, Stats., was at issue in the contested case.

(2) **SECRETARY DECISION.** (a) Notwithstanding sub. (1), the secretary, prior to hearing, may direct that the record be certified to the secretary or secretary's designee for decision in accordance with the provisions of s. 227.46 (3) (b), Stats., without an intervening decision by the administrative law judge.

(b) Notwithstanding sub. (1), the secretary, prior to hearing, may direct that the decision be made in accordance with the provisions of s. 227.46 (2) or (4), Stats.

(3) **PARTIES.** Pursuant to s. 227.47, Stats., the administrative law judge under sub. (1), or the secretary or secretary's designee under sub. (2), shall include in the decision a list of the names and addresses of all persons who appeared at the hearing and who are considered parties for purposes of review under s. 227.53, Stats. This list may differ from the list of parties prepared under s. NR 2.08, and shall be based on all of the following criteria:

(a) Nature of agency proceeding.

(b) Nature and effect of decision made.

(c) Nature of participation by those involved in the proceeding, including attendance at hearings and presentation of oral or written statements.

History: Cr. Register, December, 1976, No. 252, eff. 1-1-77; emerg. am. (2) (a), eff. 10-1-82; am. (2) (a), Register, May, 1983, No. 329, eff. 6-1-83; am. (1), Register, June, 1985, No. 354, eff. 7-1-85; am. (1), Register, September, 1986, No. 369, eff. 10-1-86; CR 02-046: am. (1) and (2) cr. (3) Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.157 Decisions in noncontested cases. (1) DECISIONS WHEN AN ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS IS COMPLETED. For any decision arising out of a noncontested case hearing, the department may not commence, engage in, fund, approve, conditionally approve, or disapprove an action that has been the subject of a department prepared environmental analysis until it has made a written findings of fact, conclusions of law and decision on compliance with s. 1.11, Stats. The decision shall include findings on all of the following whether:

(a) The department has considered the environmental analysis and comments received on it.

(b) The department has complied with the requirements of ch. NR 150 and s. 1.11, Stats.

(c) Consistent with social, economic and other essential considerations, the department has adopted all practical means within its authority to avoid or minimize environmental harm, or if not, why.

(2) **OTHER DECISIONS.** The department shall include a finding regarding compliance with s. 1.11, Stats., and ch. NR 150 in all written decisions, for which a noncontested case hearing has been held.

History: Cr. Register, January, 1987, No. 373, eff. 2-1-87; CR 02-046: am. Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04; CR 13-022: am. (1) (title), (intro.), (a) Register March 2014 No. 699, eff. 4-1-14.

NR 2.16 Reopening hearings. When a hearing in a contested case is closed, no further evidence may be received, except by order of the department or the administrative law judge reopening a closed contested case for the taking of further evidence upon application of a party showing to the department's or the administrative law judge's satisfaction that the evidence is newly discovered or was not available at the time of the hearing and that the evidence is necessary for a just disposition of the case.

History: Cr. Register, March, 1973, No. 207, eff. 4-1-73; am. Register, March, 1984, No. 339, eff. 4-1-84; CR 02-046: am. Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.17 Transcripts in contested cases. (1) METHOD AND COPIES. Hearings shall be recorded either stenographically or electronically. A typed transcript shall be made when deemed necessary by the department or the administrative law judge. If a transcript is made by the department or the division of hearings and appeals, copies shall be furnished to all persons upon request and payment of a reasonable fee, as determined by the department or the division of hearings and appeals. If no transcript is deemed necessary by the department or the administrative law judge and a party requests that one be prepared, that party shall be responsible for all costs of transcript preparation. If several parties request transcripts, the department may divide the costs of transcription equally among the parties. In lieu of a transcript the department or the division of hearings and appeals may provide any person requesting a transcript with a copy of the tape recording of the hearing upon payment of a reasonable fee. All requests for transcripts shall be made in writing and sent to the administrative law judge who presided at the hearing.

(2) FINANCIAL NEED. Any person who by affidavit or other appropriate means can establish to the satisfaction of the department or the administrator of the division of hearings and appeals that the person is impecunious and has a legal need may be provided with a copy of a transcript without charge.

(3) CORRECTIONS. Any party, within 7 days of the date of mailing of the transcript, may file with the administrative law judge a notice in writing of any claimed error therein, and shall mail a copy of such notice to each party of record. Other parties may contest any claimed error within 12 days of the date of the mailing of the transcript by so notifying the administrative law judge and other parties of record. All parties will be advised by the administrative law judge of any authorized corrections to the record.

History: Cr. Register, March, 1973, No. 207, eff. 4-1-73; am. Register, December, 1976, No. 252, eff. 1-1-77; am. (1) and (2), Register, March, 1984, No. 339, eff. 4-1-84; CR 02-046: am. (1) and (3) Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.18 Briefs. (1) TIME FOR BRIEFS. In contested cases, parties shall indicate on the record after the close of testimony at the hearing whether they desire to file briefs. The administrative law judge may establish a schedule for the filing of briefs. The party or parties having the burden of proof shall file the first brief. Other parties may then file response briefs, which may be replied to. In the alternative, the administrative law judge may direct that briefs of all parties be filed simultaneously.

(2) NUMBER. Unless otherwise provided for by the administrative law judge, one copy of all briefs shall be filed with the division of hearings and appeals together with a certification showing when and upon whom copies have been served. Briefs which contain a summary of evidence or facts relied upon shall include reference to specific portions of the record containing the evidence.

(3) EFFECT OF EARLY FILING. The filing of briefs in less time

than allowed does not change the due dates for the remaining briefs.

History: Cr. Register, March, 1973, No. 207, eff. 4-1-73; am., (1), Register, March, 1984, No. 339, eff. 4-1-84; CR 02-046: am. Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.19 Confidential status. (1) APPLICABILITY. This section establishes a procedure which shall apply to requests made to the department to treat as confidential, information in possession of the department or being requested by the department.

(2) RESPONSIBILITY FOR ESTABLISHING CONFIDENTIALITY. The burden of establishing the need for confidential treatment of any information shall be on the person requesting such treatment of the information.

(3) APPLICATION FOR CONFIDENTIAL STATUS. Any person seeking confidential treatment of information shall file with the department a written application for confidential status containing in affidavit form:

- (a) The name and address of the applicant;
- (b) The position of the individual filing the application;
- (c) The specific type of information for which confidential status is sought;
- (d) The facts and supporting legal authority believed to constitute a basis for obtaining confidential treatment of the information.

(4) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION. Within 30 days of the receipt of an application, the department shall mail to the applicant a written set of questions if necessary for a determination under this section. If an extension has not been granted and if the applicant fails to answer all the questions in affidavit form within 30 days, the department shall deny the application. The responses to the questions shall be treated as confidential if a request for such treatment from the applicant accompanies the responses, and if the applicant demonstrates that the responses are entitled to confidential treatment under this section.

(5) DECISION. (a) Within 60 days of receipt of a complete application or within 60 days of receipt by the department of the information requested in questions asked pursuant to sub. (4), the department shall issue a written decision on the request for confidentiality. The decision shall include all of the following:

1. A finding which identifies the type of information sought to be assigned confidential status.
2. A determination of whether the department has the authority to compel submittal of the information.
3. If the authority exists, a determination of whether the department is authorized by law to assign confidential status to the type of information at issue.

4. The decision to deny or to grant the request in whole or in part.

(b) A decision to assign confidential status shall be made pursuant to one of the following:

1. Section 285.70, Stats.
2. Section 289.09, Stats.
3. Section 291.15, Stats.
4. Section 293.47, Stats.
5. Section 283.55, Stats.
6. Upon a finding consistent with the ruling in *State ex rel. Youmans v. Owens*, 28 Wis.2d 672, that confidential treatment of the information is in the public interest.
7. Other specific statutory or common law right to confidential treatment of information.

(c) A decision made pursuant to *Youmans* shall also include answers to the following questions:

1. How many people have knowledge of the supposedly “secret” information? Will disclosure increase that number to a significant degree?

2. Does the contested information have any value to the possessor? To a competitor? Is that value substantial?

3. What damage, if any, would the possessor of the secret suffer from its disclosure? What advantages would its competitors reap from disclosure?

4. What benefits are likely to flow from disclosure? To whom? Are they significant? In this connection, what is the public “need” for disclosure? Can it be satisfied in any other way?

(d) The definition of “trade secret” in s. 134.90 (1), Stats., is adopted to apply to determinations made pursuant to s. 283.55, Stats.

(e) A decision to approve the request in whole or in part shall be published by the department as a class 1 notice in the official state newspaper, and such other notice as the department deems appropriate shall be provided. The applicant or any interested member of the public may obtain an adjudicatory hearing on the decision to grant the request in whole or in part by petitioning the department for such a hearing within 10 days of publication of the notice. If the decision is to deny the request, the applicant shall be notified in writing of the decision by the department, and shall have 15 days from the date of mailing of the decision to petition the department for an adjudicatory hearing on the decision. A decision to grant confidential status may state a term for which confidential status is granted. Upon expiration of the stated term, the confidential status shall terminate, unless it is renewed upon proper application.

(6) HEARING ON THE DECISION. (a) If the department grants a request under s. 227.42, Stats., for a contested case hearing on the decision to grant or deny confidential status, the department and any interested party may appear and present evidence or testimony supporting its position. A class 1 notice of the hearing shall be published by the department in the official state newspaper, and other notice as the department deems appropriate shall be provided.

(b) The hearing shall be before an administrative law judge and testimony shall be under oath and subject to cross-examination. The burden of establishing the confidential status shall be with the applicant who sought confidential status for the information which is the subject of the hearing.

(c) The administrative law judge shall exercise discretion to determine which individuals may have access to information alleged to be confidential and shall exercise the authority provided by law to impose protective measures and conditions for inspection necessary to safeguard confidentiality of the information during and after the hearing.

(7) DECISION FOLLOWING HEARING. If a hearing is held, the decision of the administrative law judge shall be the final decision of the department. The decision of the administrative law judge shall be in writing, shall include findings of fact and conclusions of law, and shall be provided to all parties to the hearing.

(8) INTERIM CONFIDENTIAL STATUS. Information for which confidential status has been requested shall be kept confidential by the department while it makes its decision under this section. Information for which confidential status has been denied may not be open to public scrutiny until 40 days after issuance of the denial. If the denial is appealed, the information may not be open to public scrutiny until 40 days after completion of all appeals. Additional information supplied by the applicant to support the request for confidentiality shall be treated as confidential if the

applicant so requests and the applicant demonstrates that the additional information is entitled to confidential treatment under this section.

History: Emerg. cr. eff. 1-1-75; Cr. Register, May, 1975, No. 233, eff. 6-1-75; r. and recr. Register, July, 1978, No. 271, eff. 8-1-78; am. (5) (b) and (e), Register, March, 1984, No. 339, eff. 4-1-84; corrections in (5) (b), (c) and (d) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, October, 1999, No. 526; CR 02-046: am. (4), (5) (a), (b), (c) (intro.), (d) and (e), and (6) to (8), r. (9) Register, September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.195 Public records and information. **(1)** It is vital that the public receive factual information on the affairs of state government through all forms of communication. Whether the information is requested by media representatives or individual citizens, department employees shall assist in securing facts necessary to allow understanding of and participation in government and government agencies.

(2) Department employees are authorized to answer questions within their competency, whether these are asked by the public or by representatives of the news media. Employees are responsible for the factual accuracy of the information they provide. Requests to inspect department records shall be referred to the custodian of the records.

(3) In cases where the regional or bureau directors are concerned that the public interest in withholding inspection outweighs the public interest in permitting it, the file or requested information shall be provided to the secretary, deputy secretary or division administrator for review with the bureau of legal services and for determination.

(4) Regional and bureau directors are designated as custodians of their respective department regional and central office records and files and are delegated the responsibility for them as well as the authority to provide copies or inspection as provided herein.

(5) (a) Requests for copies of records and files shall be complied with unless the records fall within the categories in ss. 19.35 (1) (am), 19.356 and 19.36, Stats. The requestor shall pay the copying charge for 10 or more pages. For 9 or fewer pages, there shall be no charge. Copies shall be provided to the requestor as soon as possible.

(b) When a request requires a large amount of copy work, the department may require an advance payment of the copying charge and shall inform the person requesting the copy work that there will be an approximate processing period of 2 weeks. Unusually large requests may take longer than 2 weeks. When the copying work takes 3 or more hours, the person requesting the records shall pay the department an amount equivalent to the salary, including fringe benefits, of the person doing the copying work, prorated for the amount of time the work takes. The person requesting the records may pay the charge for the employee's salary after the work is completed.

(6) (a) All meetings of governmental bodies, including advisory councils, will be open to the communication media and to the public, except where the matters under discussion fall in the categories listed in s. 19.85, Stats.

(b) Department employees are authorized and encouraged to participate in information activities contributing to a better understanding of the functions of state government, including radio and television programs, speeches, group contacts and magazine articles.

History: Cr. Register, April, 1980, No. 292, eff. 5-1-80, am. (1) to (5) (a), r. and recr. (5) (b), Register, March, 1984, No. 339, eff. 4-1-84; CR 02-046: renum. and am. (2) (a) to be (2), r. (2) (b), am. (3) to (6) (a) Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.

NR 2.20 Review of contested case decision. **(1)** FILING. Any party to a contested case who is adversely affected

by a final decision rendered after a contested case hearing on the matter may, within 20 days after issuance of the decision, file a written petition for review by the secretary or the secretary's designee. The petition shall specify in detail the grounds for the review, the relief which petitioner seeks and citation to supporting authorities which petitioner believes aids petitioner's case. The secretary may not delegate the review to anyone who has had prior involvement in either the hearing or decision-making process.

(2) SERVICE. The petition for review under this section shall be served on the secretary as provided for in s. NR 2.03. Copies of the petition for review shall be served by regular mail upon the administrative law judge and upon all parties to the action.

(3) DECISION. Within 14 days of the receipt of the petition, the secretary shall decide whether or not to grant the requested review. If the secretary decides to grant the review, the secretary may order the filing of briefs, presentation of oral argument, or a rehearing of all or part of the evidence presented at the original public hearing, or any combination thereof.

(4) APPEAL. A petition for review pursuant to this section is not a prerequisite for appeal or review under ss. 227.52 to 227.53, Stats.

(5) SUSPENSION OF DECISIONS. The filing of a petition for review under this section does not suspend or delay the effective date of a decision, and the decision shall take effect on the date of the decision unless another date is set by the department or the administrative law judge, and shall continue in effect unless provisions of the decision are specifically suspended or delayed by the secretary in writing. Petition for suspension of the effective date of a decision shall be clearly specified in the petition for review under this section.

(6) EFFECT ON JUDICIAL REVIEW. An action pending under this section does not in any manner affect or extend the time limits for filing actions in circuit court for review under ss. 227.52 and 227.53, Stats.

History: Cr. Register, February, 1976, No. 242, eff. 3-1-76; am. (1), (2) and (5), cr. (6), Register, March, 1984, No. 339, eff. 4-1-84; correction in (4) and (6) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, January, 1987, No. 373; CR 02-046: am. Register September 2004 No. 585, eff. 10-1-04.