

**WAC 242-03-575 Settlement extensions and mediation.** (1) If additional time is necessary to achieve settlement of a dispute that is an issue in a petition before the board, the board may extend the one hundred eighty-day time limit for issuing a final decision and order, as provided in RCW 36.70A.300 (2)(b). The presiding officer may authorize one, or more, extensions of up to ninety days each.

(2) A request for a settlement extension must be filed with the board not later than seven days before the date scheduled for the hearing on the merits of the petition.

(3) The presiding officer may grant a request for a settlement extension if:

(a) The request was timely filed; and

(b) (i) All parties named in the caption of the petition, agree to and sign the request; or

(ii) A petitioner and respondent agree to and sign the request and the board determines that a negotiated settlement between the remaining parties could resolve significant issues in dispute.

(4) The presiding officer may require status reports from the parties to determine whether progress is being made on resolving the dispute.

(5) At the request of the parties the board may grant a settlement extension to allow time for mediation of some or all of the issues of the appeal. At the request of the parties, the board may appoint a board member from a different region to serve as a mediator. If the parties do not reach agreement through mediation in the extension time granted, the appeal proceeds to hearing.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 36.70A.270(7). WSR 11-13-109, § 242-03-575, filed 6/21/11, effective 7/22/11.]