

WAC 391-45-110 Deficiency notice—Preliminary ruling—Deferral to arbitration. The executive director or a designated staff member shall determine whether the facts alleged in the complaint may constitute an unfair labor practice within the meaning of the applicable statute.

(1) If the facts alleged do not, as a matter of law, constitute a violation, a deficiency notice shall be issued and served on all parties, identifying the defects and specifying a due date for the filing and service of an amended complaint. If the defects are not cured within twenty-one days, an order shall be issued and served, dismissing the defective allegation(s) and stating the reasons for that action. Unless appealed to the commission under WAC 391-45-350, an order of dismissal issued under this subsection shall be the final order of the agency on the defective allegation(s), with the same force and effect as if issued by the commission.

(2) If one or more allegations state a cause of action for unfair labor practice proceedings before the commission, a preliminary ruling summarizing the allegation(s) shall be issued and served on all parties.

(a) A preliminary ruling forwarding a case for further proceedings is an interim order which may only be appealed to the commission by a notice of appeal filed after issuance of an examiner decision under WAC 391-45-310.

(b) The preliminary ruling limits the causes of action before an examiner and the commission. A complainant who claims that the preliminary ruling failed to address one or more causes of action it sought to advance in the complaint must, prior to the issuance of a notice of hearing, seek clarification from the person that issued the preliminary ruling.

(c) The preliminary ruling shall establish the due date for the respondent to file its answer.

(3) The agency may defer the processing of allegations which state a cause of action under subsection (2) of this section, pending the outcome of related contractual dispute resolution procedures, but shall retain jurisdiction over those allegations.

(a) Deferral to arbitration may be ordered where:

(i) Employer conduct alleged to constitute an unlawful unilateral change of employee wages, hours or working conditions is arguably protected or prohibited by a collective bargaining agreement in effect between the parties at the time of the alleged unilateral change;

(ii) The parties' collective bargaining agreement provides for final and binding arbitration of grievances concerning its interpretation or application; and

(iii) There are no procedural impediments to a determination on the merits of the contractual issue through proceedings under the contractual dispute resolution procedure.

(b) Processing of the unfair labor practice allegation under this chapter shall be resumed following issuance of an arbitration award or resolution of the grievance, and the contract interpretation made in the contractual proceedings shall be considered binding, except where:

(i) The contractual procedures were not conducted in a fair and orderly manner; or

(ii) The contractual procedures have reached a result which is repugnant to the purposes and policies of the applicable collective bargaining statute.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.52.080, 41.56.090, 41.58.050, 41.59.110, 41.76.060, 41.80.080. WSR 08-04-059, § 391-45-110, filed 1/31/08, effective 4/1/08. Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.52.080, 41.56.090, 41.59.110, 41.58.050, 28B.52.065, 28B.52.073, 34.05.419, 41.56.140, 41.56.150 and 41.59.140. WSR 00-14-048, § 391-45-110, filed 6/30/00, effective 8/1/00; WSR 98-14-112, § 391-45-110, filed 7/1/98, effective 8/1/98; WSR 96-07-105, § 391-45-110, filed 3/20/96, effective 4/20/96. Statutory Authority: RCW 41.58.050, 28B.52.080, 41.56.090, 41.59.110, 28B.52.073, 41.56.140, 41.56.150, 41.59.140 and 53.18.015. WSR 90-06-074, § 391-45-110, filed 3/7/90, effective 4/7/90. Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.52.080, 41.56.040, 41.58.050, 41.59.110 and 47.64.040. WSR 80-14-048 (Order 80-7), § 391-45-110, filed 9/30/80, effective 11/1/80.]