

WAC 137-56-210 Disciplinary hearing—Rules of evidence. (1) All relevant and material evidence is admissible which, in the opinion of the hearing officer, is the best evidence reasonably obtainable having due regard for its necessity, availability, and trustworthiness.

(2) All evidence material to the issues raised in the hearing shall be offered into evidence. All evidence forming the basis for the hearing officer's decision in a matter shall be offered into evidence.

(3) The work/training release offender shall be allowed to call witnesses approved by the hearing officer pursuant to WAC 137-56-180 (1)(e) and to present documentary evidence in his/her defense at the hearing when permitting the work/training release offender to do so will not be unduly hazardous to the work/training release facility's safety or correctional goals unless the testimony to be presented by the witness and/or the information desired to be presented is deemed by the hearing officer to be irrelevant, immaterial, unnecessarily duplicative of other information and/or testimony before the hearing officer, or otherwise found to be unnecessary to the adequate presentation of the work/training release offender's case. The testimony of all witnesses from outside the work/training release facility shall be considered in writing. In the event the hearing officer determines that the presence of a witness is appropriate, the hearing officer should call the witness, or in its discretion, may continue the hearing if the witness is unavailable, but will become available within a reasonable period of time: Provided, however, That if the witness is unavailable, the hearing officer may, in his or her discretion, consider the written testimony previously submitted.

(4) The work/training release offender may question witnesses against him/her at the discretion of the hearing officer. If the hearing officer determines that a source of information would be subject to risk or harm if his/her identity were disclosed, testimony of the confidential source may be introduced by the testimony of a staff member. The confidential testimony may be provided by the source or by the written and signed statement of the source. If the staff member to whom the source provided information is unavailable, the written statement of this staff member may be used. The hearing officer shall, out of the presence of all work/training release offenders and off the record, identify the confidential source, and how the testifying staff member received the confidential information. The staff member presenting the information from a confidential source shall identify the source and the circumstances surrounding the receipt of the confidential information to the hearing officer, off the record. The hearing officer shall make an independent determination regarding the reliability of the confidential source, the credibility of the confidential information, and the necessity of not revealing the source of the confidential information. In determining whether the confidential source is reliable and the confidential information is credible, the hearing officer should consider all relevant circumstances including, but not limited to:

(a) Evidence from other staff members that the confidential source has previously given reliable information;

(b) Evidence that the confidential source had no apparent motive to fabricate information;

(c) Evidence that the confidential source received no benefit from providing the information;

(d) Whether the confidential source is giving first-hand information;

(e) Whether the confidential information is internally consistent and is consistent with other known facts; and

(f) The existence of corroborating evidence.

The hearing officer shall also determine whether safety concerns justify nondisclosure of the source of confidential information. The reliability and credibility determination and the need for confidentiality must be made on the record.

(5) Documentary evidence, including written statements submitted by interested parties on behalf of the offender, may be received. Such evidence may include copies of documents, excerpts from documents and incorporation of written material by reference, including depositions.

(6) The hearing officer should determine if the offender is competent to understand the charges and proceedings or needs an interpreter to participate therein. If the offender is not competent or needs an interpreter, the hearing officer should postpone the hearing to secure a report on the competency of the offender, provide an interpreter, or take such other action as will assure the fairness and orderliness of the hearings.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 72.01.090, 72.09.130, and 9.94.070. WSR 05-24-009 and 06-02-038, § 137-56-210, filed 11/28/05 and 12/28/05, effective 5/1/06. WSR 95-22-060, § 137-56-210, filed 10/30/95, effective 12/1/95. WSR 94-07-065, § 137-56-210, filed 3/14/94, effective 5/1/94. Statutory Authority: RCW 72.65.100. WSR 86-06-012 (Order 86-02), § 137-56-210, filed 2/21/86; WSR 82-08-055 (Order 82-06), § 137-56-210, filed 4/5/82. Formerly WAC 275-92-535.]