

WAC 461-08-525 Rules of evidence—Official notice—Material facts. (1) In the absence of controverting evidence, the board and its hearing officers, upon request made before or during a hearing, or in a proposed decision, may officially notice:

(a) **Board proceedings.** The pendency of, the issues and position of the parties therein, and the disposition of any proceeding then pending before or theretofore concluded by the board;

(b) **Business customs.** General customs and practices followed in the transaction of business;

(c) **Notorious facts.** Facts so generally and widely known to all well informed persons as not to be subject to reasonable dispute, or specific facts which are capable of immediate and accurate demonstration by resort to accessible sources of generally accepted authority, including but not exclusively, facts stated in any publication authorized or permitted by law to be made by any federal or state officer, department, or agency;

(d) **Technical knowledge.** Matters within the technical knowledge of the board as a body of experts, within the scope or pertaining to the subject matter of its statutory duties, responsibilities or jurisdiction.

(2) **Request or suggestion.** Any party may request, or the presiding officer may suggest, that official notice be taken of a material fact, which shall be clearly and precisely stated, orally on the record, at any prehearing conference or oral hearing or argument, or may make such request or suggestion by written notice, any pleading, motion, memorandum, or brief served upon all parties, at any time prior to a final decision.

(3) **Statement.** Where an initial or final decision of the board rests in whole or in part upon official notice of a material fact, such fact shall be clearly and precisely stated in such decision. In determining whether to take official notice of material facts, the hearing officer may consult any source of pertinent information, whether or not furnished as it may be, by any party and whether or not admissible under the rules of evidence.

(4) **Controversion.** Any party may controvert a request or a suggestion that official notice of a material fact be taken at the time the same is made if it be made orally, or by a pleading, reply or brief in response to the pleading or brief or notice in which the same is made or suggested. If any decision is stated to rest in whole or in part upon official notice of a material fact which the parties have not had a prior opportunity to controvert, any party may controvert such fact by appropriate exceptions if such notice be taken in a petition for reconsideration if notice of such fact be taken in a final report. Such controversion shall concisely and clearly set forth the sources, authority and other data relied upon to show the existence or nonexistence of the material fact assumed or denied in the decision.

(5) **Evaluation of evidence.** Nothing herein shall be construed to preclude the board or its authorized agents from utilizing their experience, technical competence, and specialized knowledge in the evaluation of the evidence presented to them.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 90.58.175. WSR 96-15-002, § 461-08-525, filed 7/3/96, effective 8/3/96.]