

## **Rules for Public Comment**

Purpose: The following Rules shall govern the public hearing proceedings scheduled by the Division of Early Childhood Care and Development. Any individual wishing to deliver a public statement orally on the day of the hearing shall hereinafter be referred to as a “commenter.”

- All public hearings will be advertised 20 days prior to the hearing. Information regarding the date, time, and location of the hearing will be posted on the DECCD website as well as the SOS website (if applicable).
- The purpose of the hearing will be clearly stated and advertised. Commenters are strongly encouraged to address the topic at hand.
- It is the responsibility of the individual wishing to attend the public hearing to arrive at the hearing location on time. For this reason, DECCD strongly encourages individuals, especially commenters, to arrive prior to the scheduled start time. Unforeseen delays caused by traffic, road conditions, construction, on-site parking, etc., are not the responsibility of DECCD and are not grounds to petition that the hearing be re-scheduled.
- No hearing will be re-scheduled due to poor attendance.
- All hearings will be recorded and transcribed by a court reporter.
- Commenters must sign in within thirty minutes of the scheduled start time of the hearing. After the first thirty minutes of the hearing have elapsed, commenters who have not signed up to speak will not be allowed to speak.
- Commenters will speak in the order in which they have signed in.
- All stakeholders, participants, and commenters are encouraged to submit pre-written comments prior the hearing using the web form advertised by DECCD. All comments submitted through this web form will become part of the public record.
- Commenters are not required to submit pre-written comments.
- Pre-written comments may be submitted one of two ways: electronically or on-site.
  - Pre-written comments submitted on-site should be delivered to the hearing officer within the first thirty minutes of the hearing. Pre-written statements submitted after the first thirty minutes of the hearing have elapsed will not be accepted.
  - Pre-written comments can be submitted electronically prior to the hearing using the web form advertised by DECCD. Comments may also be submitted using the web form for up to five days following the hearing.
- Oral statements are limited to five (5) minutes. Time limits will be strictly enforced, and for this reason, DECCD encourages commenters to submit a pre-written comment.
- Commenters are limited to one (1), five (5) minute turn.
- Commenters may not yield the balance of any un-used time to another commenter or audience member.
- The meeting will adjourn after one of two conditions is met: after three hours have elapsed OR after all commenters have been heard and duly allotted five minutes for their oral presentation. The hearing shall not adjourn if thirty minutes have not elapsed since the start of the meeting.

- Once the hearing officer adjourns the meeting, no further comments may be entered in to the record.
- All comments will be published and publicly viewable online once DECCD has had adequate time to compile the comments and receives the transcript of the hearing from the court reporter.