

WAC 220-660-460 Informal appeal of administrative actions. An informal appeal is an appeal to the department pursuant to chapter 34.05 RCW (Administrative Procedure Act).

(1) The department recommends that a person aggrieved by the issuance, denial, provisioning, or modification of an HPA contact the department employee responsible for making the decision on the HPA before initiating an informal appeal. Discussion of concerns with the department employee often results in a resolution of the problem without the need for an informal appeal.

(2) The department encourages aggrieved persons to take advantage of the informal appeal process before initiating a formal appeal. However, the informal appeal process is not mandatory, and a person may proceed directly to a formal appeal under WAC 220-660-470.

This rule does not apply to any provisions in pamphlet HPAs. A person who disagrees with a provision in a pamphlet HPA may apply for an individual, written HPA.

(3) Any person with legal standing may request an informal appeal of the following department actions:

(a) The issuance, denial, provisioning, or modification of an HPA; or

(b) An order imposing civil penalties.

(4) A request for an informal appeal must be in writing and must be received by the department within thirty days from the date of receipt of the decision or order. "Date of receipt" means:

(a) Five business days after the date of mailing; or

(b) The date of actual receipt, when the actual receipt date can be proven by a preponderance of the evidence. A person's sworn affidavit or declaration indicating the date of receipt, which is unchallenged by the department, must constitute enough evidence of actual receipt. The date of actual receipt; however, may not exceed forty-five days from the date of mailing.

(5) A request for informal appeal must be submitted in one of the following ways:

(a) Mailed to the:

HPA Appeals Coordinator
Department of Fish and Wildlife
Habitat Program
P.O. Box 43234
Olympia, WA 98504-3234;

(b) Email: HPAapplications@dfw.wa.gov;

(c) Fax: 360-902-2946; or

(d) Hand delivered to the Natural Resources Building, 1111 Washington Street S.E., Habitat Program, Fifth Floor.

(6) The request must be plainly labeled as "Request for Informal Appeal" and must include the following:

(a) The appellant's name, address, email address (if available), and phone number;

(b) The specific department action that the appellant contests;

(c) The date the department issued, denied, provisioned, or modified an HPA, or the date the department issued the order imposing civil penalties;

(d) The log number or a copy of the HPA, or a copy of the order imposing civil penalties;

(e) A short and plain statement explaining why the appellant considers the department action or order to provide inadequate protection of fish life or to be otherwise unlawful;

(f) A clear and concise statement of facts to explain the appellant's grounds for appeal;

(g) Whether the appellant is the permittee, HPA applicant, landowner, resident, or another person with an interest in the department action in question;

(h) The specific relief requested;

(i) The attorney's name, address, email address (if available), and phone number, if the appellant is represented by legal counsel; and

(j) The signature of the appellant or his or her attorney.

(7) Upon receipt of a valid request for an informal appeal, the department may initiate a review of the department action.

(8) Informal conference. If the appellant agrees, and the appellant applied for the HPA, resolution of the appeal may be facilitated through an informal conference. The informal conference is an optional part of the informal appeal and is normally a discussion between the appellant, the department employee responsible for the decision, and a supervisor. The time period for the department to issue a decision on an informal appeal is suspended during the informal conference process.

(9) Informal appeal hearing. If the appeal is received from a person who is not the permittee, or if the appeal involves an order imposing civil penalties, or if a resolution is not reached through the informal conference process, then the HPA appeals coordinator or designee may conduct an informal appeal hearing or review. Upon completion of the informal appeal hearing or review, the HPA appeals coordinator or designee must recommend a decision to the director or designee. The director or designee must approve or decline to approve the recommended decision within sixty days of the date the department received the request for informal appeal, unless the appellant agrees to an extension of time. The department must notify the appellant in writing of the decision of the director or designee.

(10) If the department declines to initiate an informal review of its action after receipt of a valid request, or the appellant still wishes to contest the department action following completion of the informal appeal process, the appellant may initiate a formal appeal under WAC 220-660-470. Formal review must be requested within the time periods specified in WAC 220-660-470.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.12.047, 77.55.021, 77.55.091, 77.55.051, 77.55.081, 34.05.328, and 34.05.350. WSR 18-10-054, § 220-660-460, filed 4/27/18, effective 6/1/18. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, and 77.12.047. WSR 15-02-029 (Order 14-353), § 220-660-460, filed 12/30/14, effective 7/1/15.]