

**WAC 480-07-498 Hearing—Public comment.** (1) **General.** The commission will receive as a bench exhibit any public comment submitted by nonparties in connection with an adjudicative proceeding. The exhibit will be treated as an illustrative exhibit that expresses public sentiment received concerning the pending matter. The commission may receive into evidence documents a member of the public presents that are exceptional in their probative value after the commission provides the parties an opportunity to respond to those documents.

(2) **Public comment hearing.** The commission may convene one or more public comment hearing sessions to receive oral and written comments from members of the public who are not parties in the proceeding. When the commission conducts a public comment hearing, a presiding officer will make an opening statement explaining the purpose of the hearing and will briefly summarize the principal issues in the matter. The presiding officer will administer an oath to those members of the public who indicate a desire to testify concerning their views on the issues. The presiding officer will call each member of the public who wishes to testify, will inquire briefly into the identity and interests of the witness, and will provide an opportunity for a brief statement. Typically, public witnesses may expect to have three to five minutes to make an oral statement. A public witness may supplement his or her oral statements with written comments signed by the witness.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 80.01.040 and 80.04.160. WSR 17-06-051 (General Order R-588), § 480-07-498, filed 2/28/17, effective 3/31/17; WSR 03-24-028 (General Order R-510, Docket No. A-010648), § 480-07-498, filed 11/24/03, effective 1/1/04.]