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Tips for a Better Hearing Process at the Unemployment  
Compensation Review Commission

The unemployment insurance hearing process is intended to be simple, and neither claimants nor employers are required to have an attorney. The Hearing Officer will explain the hearing procedure and question all witnesses.

1

**File your appeal on time.**

The deadline for filing your appeal will appear at the bottom of all benefits and tax decisions. You can file by U.S. Mail, by fax, or electronically to the address listed.

2

**If your appeal was late, be prepared to explain why.**

If an appeal is late, a separate timeliness hearing will be held. No decision may be made on the merits of your appeal without a timely appeal.

3

**Read the Notice that an Appeal has been transferred to the Commission as well as the accompanying brochure.**

It includes information about exhibits, subpoenas, file copies, and the issues in the case. Over 99% of hearings are held by telephone. If you wish to request an in-person hearing, you must do so within 10 days of this Notice. All in-person hearings are held in Columbus, Ohio.

4

**Begin preparing your case as soon as possible.**

Request a copy of the Director's file from the Commission. It includes the prior decisions in your case and the information previously gathered by the Department of Job and Family Services.

5

**Read the Hearing Notice.**

This notice lists the date, time and location of the hearing and includes critical information about how to register online or by telephone. You must register for your hearing before you receive a call from the Hearing Officer. If you fail to do this important step, your appeal may be dismissed.

6

**If you need a postponement, you should call as soon as possible.**

An explanation of the reason for the request is required and must be discussed. Please do not send written requests.

7

**Use subpoenas wisely.**

You will need to provide the name and address of any witness who will not voluntarily attend on your behalf. Allow plenty of time for the subpoena to be issued.

8

**Discuss your witness' testimony prior to the hearing.**

Prepare your witnesses so that you know that they will be available, what information they can add, and whether their testimony is relevant.

9

**Appear for the hearing 15 minutes early.**

You must register in advance either by phone or online. If you do not appear within 15 minutes of the scheduled hearing time, your appeal could be dismissed.

10

**Understand that the hearing is an administrative procedure.**

Neither party has the burden of proof, and the case will be reviewed as if for the first time. The Director's file is part of the record.

11

**Expect hearsay...**

The formal rules of evidence do not apply in Commission hearings.

12

**... But try to present the eyewitnesses and/or key documents.**

These are the most compelling types of evidence. You can subpoena both documents and witnesses.

13

**Summarize large amounts of written materials.**

You will also need to explain technical terms, acronyms, and trade customs.

14

**Avoid prompting your witness to change their testimony.**

However, you have the right to impeach your own witness if the testimony is false.

15

**Use cross-examination wisely.**

Focus on the key issues. It is usually better to make your point through your own testimony rather than trying to get an opposing witness to agree with you.

16

**Do not assume the Hearing Officer knows every rule or law.**

The hearing officer will be familiar with the Ohio unemployment insurance laws and rules, but if another law or regulation could affect your case, be prepared to explain, and provide a citation.

17

**Avoid reliance on other decisions or unusual theories.**

Even a case involving a coworker may involve different facts which may lead to a different decision. Your case should stand on its own.

18

**If you lose at Hearing Officer level, you can exercise your right to request full Commission review.**

The deadline and instructions for filing your request for review will appear at the bottom of your decision.

19

**If you have a complaint, problem, or concern, please reach out to us as soon as possible.**