**Section 730.230 Ex Parte Communication**

a) Once appointed and/or retained, *the Hearing Officer shall not communicate directly or indirectly with any Party or any person* interested in the outcome of the proceeding, with respect to the merits of any case not concluded, *except upon notice and opportunity for all Parties to participate*. [5 ILCS 100/10-60(a)] The Hearing Officer may impose and enforce sanctions against a Party who violates this Section.

b) *An ex parte communication received by the Hearing Officer shall be made a part of the record of the pending matter, including all written communications, all written responses to the communications, and a memorandum stating the substance of all oral communications and all responses made and the identity of each person from whom the ex parte communication was received. Communications regarding matters of procedure and practice, such as the format of pleadings, number of copies required, manner of service, and status of proceedings, are not considered ex parte communications under this Section.* [5 ILCS 100/10-60(c) and (d)]