**Section 303.21 Expedited Procedure**

a) If agreed to by both parties, the following shall be the procedure for an expedited hearing:

1) The Director shall appoint an employee of the Department of Central Management Services, Division of Legal/Labor Relations, to serve as the hearing officer of the expedited Step 4 grievance hearing.

2) The hearing officer shall have the authority to mediate the grievance with the parties prior to the scheduling of the hearing.

3) If the parties are unable to reach a resolution, the hearing officer shall schedule the hearing with the grievant or grievant's representative and the representative of the employee's agency to hear the grievance.

4) Prior to the hearing, the parties shall submit documentation in support of their respective case. The hearing officer shall have the authority to accept or deny all submissions of evidence.

5) At the grievance hearing, both parties shall present a summary of their cases. Witnesses are not allowed, but witness statements may be entered. The opposing party will have the opportunity to respond to the documentation and/or witness statements at the hearing. At the conclusion, the hearing officer shall adjourn the grievance hearing. The hearing officer shall make a written recommendation to the Director within five working days after the hearing date.

6) Upon receipt of the recommendation of the hearing officer, the Director shall approve, disapprove, or modify the recommendation, and shall render a decision on the recommendation in writing, and cause a copy of that decision to be served upon the parties. The Director's decision shall be final.

(Source: Added at 42 Ill. Reg. 7677, effective April 11, 2018)