**Section 508.90 Prehearing Conferences**

a) A prehearing conference may be scheduled by the administrative law judge or Department at their discretion or as a result of a request pursuant to subsection (b) of this Section. This conference shall be for the purpose of considering:

1) the simplification of the issues;

2) amendments to the pleadings;

3) the possibility of obtaining admissions of fact and of documents that will avoid unnecessary proof;

4) limitation of the number of expert witness; and

5) any other matters that may aid in the disposition of the hearing.

b) In any proceedings under this Section in which the Department has not scheduled a prehearing conference, any party to the proceedings may request the scheduling of a prehearing conference. Such request must be made in writing and received by the administrative law judge at least 5 days prior to the scheduled hearing date. The requesting party shall serve all other parties to the proceedings with a copy of the request.

c) Upon the receipt of a request for a prehearing conference in accordance with subsection (b) of this Section, the administrative law judge shall schedule the prehearing conference and notify all parties of the date, time and place of the conference.

d) After a prehearing conference, the administrative law judge shall make a report to all parties that recites any action taken by the administrative law judge and any agreements made by the parties as to any of the matters considered.

e) Any party may request additional prehearing conferences. The administrative law judge, in his or her discretion, may deny or grant such a request.

f) A certified stenographic reporter (court reporter) will not be present at a prehearing conference unless one of the parties to the proceeding requests the Department to make such arrangements. The Department must receive such a request at least two days in advance of the scheduled prehearing conference. The party requesting the presence of the court reporter shall be billed directly for the fee of the reporter.

g) The Department shall appoint a sign or language interpreter upon request. An interpreter must be able to communicate with the person for whom the interpreter was requested and must take an oath or affirmation to make a true interpretation in an understandable manner and convey the statements of the person to the best of the interpreter's skill.