**Section 2123.160 Hearings**

The sequence to be followed for all contested cases is as follows:

a) Preliminary Hearing. The purpose is to set a date on which all parties expect to be prepared and to rule on any preliminary motions which are presented. This may be eliminated by agreement of the parties, by the Board, or by the hearing officer.

b) Prehearing Conference – Optional. The purposes are set out in Section 2123.150.

c) Hearings

1) Preliminary Matters – Motion, attempts to narrow issues or limit evidence.

2) Opening Statements – The party bearing the burden of proof proceeds first.

3) Case in Chief − Evidence and witnesses are presented by the party bearing the burden of proof. As witnesses' testimony is completed, they are subject to cross-examination.

4) Defense – Evidence and witnesses may be presented by the opposing parties.

5) Closing Statements – The party bearing the burden of proof proceeds first, then the opposing party, then a final word by the party bearing the burden of proof.

6) Board Report − Described in Section 2123.240.