§ 7804. Procedure. (a) Special proceeding. A proceeding under this article is a special proceeding.

(b) Where proceeding brought. A proceeding under this article shall be brought in the supreme court in the county specified in subdivision (b) of section 506 except as that subdivision otherwise provides.

(c) Time for service of notice of petition and answer. Unless the court grants an order to show cause to be served in lieu of a notice of petition at a time and in a manner specified therein, a notice of petition, together with the petition and affidavits specified in the notice, shall be served on any adverse party at least twenty days before the time at which the petition is noticed to be heard. An answer and supporting affidavits, if any, shall be served at least five days before such time. A reply, together with supporting affidavits, if any, shall be served at least one day before such time. In the case of a proceeding pursuant to this article against a state body or officers, or against members of a state body or officers whose terms have expired as authorized by subdivision (b) of section 7802 of this chapter, commenced either by order to show cause or notice of petition, in addition to the service thereof provided in this section, the order to show cause or notice of petition must be served upon the attorney general by delivery of such order or notice to an assistant attorney general at an office of the attorney general in the county in which venue of the proceeding is designated, or if there is no office of the attorney general within such county, at the office of the attorney general nearest such county. In the case of a proceeding pursuant to this article against members of bodies of governmental subdivisions whose terms have expired as authorized by subdivision (b) of section 7802 of this chapter, the order to show cause or notice of petition must be served upon such governmental subdivision in accordance with section 311 of this chapter.

(d) Pleadings. There shall be a verified petition, which may be accompanied by affidavits or other written proof. Where there is an adverse party there shall be a verified answer, which must state pertinent and material facts showing the grounds of the respondent's action complained of. There shall be a reply to a counterclaim denominated as such and there shall be a reply to new matter in the answer or where the accuracy of proceedings annexed to the answer is disputed. The court may permit such other pleadings as are authorized in

an action upon such terms as it may specify.

(e) Answering affidavits; record to be filed; default. The body or officer shall file with the answer a certified transcript of the record of the proceedings under consideration, unless such a transcript has already been filed with the clerk of the court. The respondent shall also serve and submit with the answer affidavits or other written proof showing such evidentiary facts as shall entitle him to a trial of any issue of fact. The court may order the body or officer to supply any defect or omission in the answer, transcript or an answering affidavit. Statements made in the answer, transcript or an answering affidavit are not conclusive upon the petitioner. Should the body or officer fail either to file and serve an answer or to move to dismiss, the court may either issue a judgment in favor of the petitioner or order that an answer be submitted.

(f) Objections in point of law. The respondent may raise an objection in point of law by setting it forth in his answer or by a motion to dismiss the petition, made upon notice within the time allowed for answer. If the motion is denied, the court shall permit the respondent to answer, upon such terms as may be just; and unless the order specifies otherwise, such answer shall be served and filed within five days after service of the order with notice of entry; and the petitioner may re-notice the matter for hearing upon two days' notice, or the respondent may re-notice the matter for hearing upon service of the answer upon seven days' notice. The petitioner may raise an objection in point of law to new matter contained in the answer by setting it forth in his reply or by moving to strike such matter on the day the petition is noticed or re-noticed to be heard.

(g) Hearing and determination; transfer to appellate division. Where the substantial evidence issue specified in question four of section 7803 is not raised, the court in which the proceeding is commenced shall itself dispose of the issues in the proceeding. Where such an issue is raised, the court shall first dispose of such other objections as could terminate the proceeding, including but not limited to lack of jurisdiction, statute of limitations and res judicata, without reaching the substantial evidence issue. If the determination of the other objections does not terminate the proceeding, the court shall make an order directing that it be transferred for disposition to a term of the

appellate division held within the judicial department embracing the county in which the proceeding was commenced. When the proceeding comes before it, whether by appeal or transfer, the appellate division shall dispose of all issues in the proceeding, or, if the papers are insufficient, it may remit the proceeding.

(h) Trial. If a triable issue of fact is raised in a proceeding under this article, it shall be tried forthwith. Where the proceeding was transferred to the appellate division, the issue of fact shall be tried by a referee or by a justice of the supreme court and the verdict, report or decision rendered after the trial shall be returned to, and the order thereon made by, the appellate division.

(i) Appearance by judicial officer. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, where a proceeding is brought under this article against a justice, judge, referee or judicial hearing officer appointed by a court and (1) it is brought by a party to a pending action or proceeding, and (2) it is based upon an act or acts performed by the respondent in that pending action or proceeding either granting or denying relief sought by a party thereto, and (3) the respondent is not a named party to the pending action or proceeding, in addition to service on the respondent, the petitioner shall serve a copy of the petition together with copies of all moving papers upon all other parties to the pending action or proceeding. All such parties shall be designated as respondents. Unless ordered by the court upon application of a party the respondent justice, judge, referee or judicial hearing officer need not appear in the proceeding in which case the allegations of the petition shall not be deemed admitted or denied by him. Upon election of the justice, judge, referee or judicial hearing officer not to appear, any ruling, order or judgment of the court in such proceeding shall bind said respondent. If such respondent does appear he shall respond to the petition and shall be entitled to be represented by the attorney general. If such respondent does not elect to appear all other parties shall be given notice thereof.