

Know the PUC Complaint Process and Your Options

What Does the PUC Regulate?

The PUC oversees more than 8,400 public utility providers that deliver the following services in Pennsylvania: electricity, natural gas, telephone, water and wastewater collection and disposal, steam heat, and transportation of passengers and property by motor coach, truck and taxi.

How Can the PUC Help?

Two types of public utility complaints can be filed with the PUC - an **Informal Complaint** OR a **Formal Complaint**. Before filing any complaint with the PUC, consumers should always contact the utility company first to allow an opportunity to resolve the issue.

PUC Complaint Options

- Contacting Your Utility or Company
- Filing an Informal Complaint with the PUC
- Filing a Formal Complaint with the PUC
- Filing Comments on a Proposed Rate Increase with the PUC
- Filing a Formal Complaint to a Proposed Rate Increase with the PUC

PUC Complaint Checklist

- ✓ Did you call your utility first to discuss your complaint?
- ✓ Are you the utility customer?
- ✓ Are the service and the home with service in your name?
- ✓ Do you have legal authority? (Example: Power of Attorney or Legal Guardian)
- ✓ Do you have a Protection from Abuse (PFA) Order when filing the complaint?
- ✓ Giving the PUC permission to contact the utility to review your account information?
- ✓ You still must pay all of your current bills with the utility while your complaint is under review.

What Information Do I Need?

- Your name (account holder) and all required contact information
- Customer account number
- Billing and service address
- Telephone number and fax number (if available)
- The name of the utility company or transportation service provider you have a complaint against
- Clear description of the facts leading to the complaint (you may attach supporting documents)

Note: *The same information must be provided by any person representing you.*

Informal Complaint Process

Consumers may file Informal Complaints with the PUC's Bureau of Consumer Services (BCS) against PUC-regulated electric, natural gas, telephone and water/wastewater companies. BCS will investigate the complaint, work with the parties to resolve the complaint and provide the outcome of the investigation to the customer and utility.

The PUC recommends that you use the informal complaint process first because many informal investigations take less time to resolve compared to a formal complaint legal proceeding. Informal complaints are confidential and not available for public inspection. The informal complaint process is best for residential payment arrangement requests, residential billing error investigations, and service concerns. BCS cannot require a utility to pay damages for harm to the customer or their property (civil penalties).

To file an Informal Complaint, visit www.puc.pa.gov/complaints/informal-complaints/ or call 1-800-692-7380.

Informal Complaints can also be mailed to the PUC at:

**PA Public Utility Commission
Bureau of Consumer Services
400 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120**

Informal Transportation Complaints (transportation services, for example, taxicabs, limousines, household moving companies, trucking companies, transportation network companies or paratransit companies) should be addressed to the PUC's Bureau of Investigation & Enforcement at 717-787-7598.

Note: If you have a concern with a Philadelphia taxicab or limousine company you must contact the Philadelphia Parking Authority (PPA) at www.philapark.org or call 1-888-591-3636.

Formal Complaint Process

Consumers may file Formal Complaints about billing or quality of service issues. Filing a Formal Complaint begins a legal proceeding before a PUC Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) who holds hearings, if necessary, to gather evidence and issue a decision. You must participate in this proceeding and present evidence needed to prove facts and issues that your complaint has merit. Hearings by telephone are available.

Individuals are not required to have a lawyer to file a Formal Complaint or to participate in the PUC Complaint process. However, the utility or company is required by law to be represented by a lawyer.

A Formal Complaint may take six months or more from the time you file it with the PUC's Secretary's Bureau until the time the PUC decides your case or determines whether it can address your problem or concern.

Comments should be addressed to the PUC's Secretary's Bureau and you can go online to print out a formal complaint or formal rate complaint form or call the Secretary's Bureau at 717-772-7777.

Proposed Rate Increases

Consumers may file comments about a utility's proposed rate increase by mailing a form to the PUC's Secretary's Bureau.

Consumers may file Formal Complaints to a utility's proposed rate increase with the PUC with the Secretary. Please know this will make you an active party to the litigation of the rate case. (*See Formal Complaint Process*)

Informal Complaint Form Available

For more information:

www.puc.pa.gov/complaints/informal-complaints/

or call 1-800-692-7380

or write:

**PA PUC Bureau of Consumer Services
400 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120**

 @PA_PUC

 Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission

Helpful Agencies and Resources

PA Public Utility Commission
www.puc.pa.gov

PA Public Utility Code – Title 52
www.pacodeandbulletin.gov/Display/pacode?titleNumber=052&file=/secure/pacode/data/052/052toc.html

Office of Consumer Advocate
www.oca.pa.gov
1-800-684-6560



Updated 7/26