**BEFORE THE**

**PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**

Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission : R-2021-3026682

: C-2021-3029095

v. : C-2021-3029188

:

City of Lancaster Bureau of Water :

**PREHEARING ORDER FOR TELEPHONE HEARING**

AND NOW, this 1st day of November 2021, it is hereby ORDERED:

1. **DATE AND TIME OF HEARING.** An initial telephonic hearing will be held on:

Friday, November 5, 2021 beginning at 10:00 a.m.

To participate in the hearing, you must dial the toll-free number listed below. You will be prompted to enter a PIN number, which is also listed below. You will be asked to speak your name, press the # key, and then the telephone system will connect you to the hearing. If you have any witnesses you want to have present during the hearing who are participating from a separate phone, you must provide each with the telephone number and PIN Number. They are:

**Toll-free Bridge Number: 866-953-0992**

**PIN Number: 21268703**

**FAILURE TO APPEAR**: You may lose the case if you do not take part in this hearing and present evidence on the issues raised. Your case may be dismissed “with prejudice” which means that you will be barred from filing another complaint raising the same claim(s) and issue(s) presented in the dismissed complaint. **If you fail to call in, your case may be dismissed. You will not be called by the Administrative Law Judge.**

***PLEASE READ THE ENTIRE DOCUMENT FOR INSTRUCTIONS AND PROCEDURES.***

1. **FILING AND SERVING DOCUMENTS DURING COVID-19**

FILING WITH THE PUC.

**COVID-19**. Currently the PUC’s buildings are closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the PUC remains fully functional and continues to work remotely. Because the PUC does not have access to regular U.S. Mail, all filings and service will be electronic. Therefore, all parties are encouraged to sign-up for e-filing and e-service as indicated below.

**E-FILING**. The PUC offers a *free* e-Filing Subscription Service. This service allows a user to file documents electronically and receive an automatic email notification whenever a document is added, removed, or changed on the PUC website in a specific case. For information and to subscribe to this service, visit the PUC’s website at: <http://www.puc.pa.gov/Documentation/eFiling_Subscriptions.pdf>.

## SERVING OTHER PARTIES. When you file documents with the PUC, you must also

serve a copy on the other party. During COVID-19, you can serve a copy by e-Service or e-mail. *[For your convenience, a copy of the PUC’s current service list of all parties to this proceeding is enclosed with this Order].*

SERVING THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Be sure that you serve me directly with a copy of any document that you file in this proceeding at the time of its filing. You must email one (1) copy to my Legal Assistant Athena Delvillar, [sdelvillar@pa.gov](mailto:sdelvillar@pa.gov). If you send me any correspondence or document, you must also send a copy of that correspondence or document to every other party.

1. **CONTINUANCES.** You may request a continuance of the hearing if you have a good

reason. Continuances will be granted only for good cause. To request a continuance, you must

submit a written request (a “motion”) at least five (5) days before the hearing. Your motion

should include:

1. The case name, case number, and hearing date;
2. The reason you are requesting a continuance; and
3. State whether the other party(s) agrees to the request (or if you do not know).

You must submit the motion to Legal Assistant Athena Delvillar, [sdelvillar@pa.gov](mailto:sdelvillar@pa.gov).

You must also provide a copy of the continuance request to each other party by email.

1. **PRESENTING EXHIBITS.** If you intend to present any documents or exhibits at the

hearing, you must email one (1) copy to Legal Assistant Athena Delvillar, [sdelvillar@pa.gov](mailto:sdelvillar@pa.gov), and one (1) copy to each other party.  All copies must be received at least five (5) business days before the hearing. Proposed exhibits should be properly pre-marked for identification purposes (e.g., Complainant Exhibit 1, Complainant Exhibit 2, etc.).

Note that attachments to your Complaint or Answer are not admitted into the record unless submitted separately. Please be sure to have all pre-served exhibits with you at the time of the hearing. This hearing may be your only opportunity to present evidence in support of your complaint.

1. **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIM**. If you are a domestic violence victim and you

want to be considered for protections that may be available to domestic violence victims, you must submit a copy of your Protection from Abuse (PFA) Order or other Court Order issued by a Pennsylvania court, which provides evidence that you are a domestic violence victim. In the case of these Orders, we will take precautions to ensure that your address is not made public.

1. **REPRESENTATION.** If you are an individual, you may represent yourself or you may

have an attorney represent you. All others, including a partnership, corporation, trust, association, or governmental agency or subdivision, must be represented an attorney licensed to practice law in Pennsylvania, or admitted *pro hac vice*.[[1]](#footnote-1) And, unless you are an attorney, you may not represent someone else.

1. **BURDEN OF PROOF.**  The Complainant (the one filing the Complaint) bears the burden

of proof and must present evidence sufficient to demonstrate that the utility has violated the Public Utility Code, or a regulation or order of the PUC.[[2]](#footnote-2)

1. **CONTACT INFORMATION.** If your e-mail address or telephone number changes

during the course of the proceeding, you must immediately update OALJ by calling 717-787-1399.

1. **ACCOMMODATION.**  Any party who needs an accommodation for a disability in

order to participate in this hearing process may request one. Please call the PUC scheduling office at least five (5) business days prior to your hearing to submit your request.

If you require an interpreter to participate in the hearing, we will have an interpreter present. Please call the scheduling office at the PUC at least ten (10) business days prior to your hearing to submit your request.

Scheduling Office: (717) 787-1399

The AT&T Relay Service number for persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired is:

1-800-654-5988.

1. **SETTLEMENT.** The PUC’s policy is to encourage settlements.[[3]](#footnote-3) The utility shall

contact the Complainant at least one week before the scheduled hearing to talk over a possible settlement of this case. Even if you are unable to settle this case, you may resolve many questions or issues during your talks. If an agreement is reached on all the issues, a formal hearing will not be necessary and the scheduled hearing will be cancelled.

1. **PAYMENT ARRANGEMENT CASES.** If you have requested a payment

arrangement, Chapter 14 of the Public Utility Code will be applied.[[4]](#footnote-4) You must be prepared to testify about the total gross monthly income of the household. A household includes all adults living at the service address and benefiting from the utility service. The “total gross monthly household income” includes, but is not limited to, the following: (a) the “before taxes or other deductions” pay from salaries, wages, tips or other compensation; (b) pension, retirement or social security benefits; (c) Supplemental Security Income (SSI); (d) unemployment compensation benefits; (e) workers’ compensation benefits; (f) alimony; and (g) any other source(s) of income.

The utility must prepare and submit, at a minimum, the following documents at least five (5) business days before the hearing: (a) an account statement, showing the history of the account for a minimum of 24 months or the entire history of the account, whichever is less; (b) a copy of the most recent Bureau of Consumers Services (BCS) decision, if any; and (c) a brief summary of any payment arrangement(s) made between the utility and the customer.

The customer must make monthly payments for current usage on or before the billing due date while this complaint is pending. Failure to make payments may result in the utility terminating your service.

1. **BILLING COMPLAINT**. If you are claiming that there are incorrect charges on your

utility bill, then you must be prepared to provide the dates that are important and an explanation about any amounts or charges that you believe are not correct.

1. **VIOLATIONS.** A finding of a violation of a PUC Order, regulation or statute may

result in the imposition of a civil penalty consistent with 66 Pa. C.S. § 3301 or other provision of the Public Utility Code.

1. *[RESERVED FOR OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS]*

**15. HEARING PROCEDURES.** Although the hearing will be held telephonically for the convenience of the parties, it is a formal hearing and will be conducted in accordance with the PUC’s Rules of Practice and Procedure at 52 Pa Code Chapters 1, 3, and 5.

Please be sure to participate from a location, and using a phone, where background noise will be minimized, and the reception is clear.

**16. FURTHER INFORMATION.** A guide to participating in a Formal Complaint proceeding is available on the PUC’s website at: <https://www.puc.pa.gov/complaints/formal-complaints>

Date: November 1, 2021 /s/

Darlene Heep

Administrative Law Judge

**R-2021-3026682; C-2021-3029095; C-2021-3029188 v. PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION v. CITY OF LANCASTER – BUREAU OF WATER**

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1. 52 Pa. Code §§ 1.21 & 1.22. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. 66 Pa.C.S. §332(a). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. 52 Pa. Code § 5.231(a). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. 66 Pa.C.S. §§ 1401-1419. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)