



**July 7, 2022**

To: All Parties of Record at Docket Nos.:

M-2019-3008227 – Duquesne’s 2020-2025 USECP

P-2020-3022770 – Duquesne’s Petition for Implementation of the PIPP CAP as proposed on January 6, 2020

P-2020-3023448 – Duquesne’s Petition for Implementation of the PIPP CAP

M-2016-2534323 – Duquesne’s 2017-2019 USECP

P-2022-3031621 – Duquesne’s Petition to Temporarily Increase Hardship Grants

**RE: Duquesne Light Company’s Further Revised 2020-2025 USECP  
June 28, 2022 Compliance Filing**

### *Overview*

On April 21, 2022, the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (Commission) entered an Order (April 21 Order) directing Duquesne Light Company (Duquesne) to, *inter alia*, submit a revised 2020-2025 Universal Service and Energy Conservation Plan (2020 USECP) within 30 days reflecting changes approved or directed in the April 21 Order. Duquesne was also directed to confirm that the Hardship Fund policies on the Dollar Energy Fund (DEF) website were consistent with its 2020 USECP. April 21 Order at 96, OP #10. The Commission approved the 2020 USECP conditioned upon Duquesne making the changes directed in the April 21 Order.

By Order entered on May 12, 2022, the Commission approved a Petition filed on March 28, 2022, at Docket Nos. P-2022-3031621, *et al.*, to temporarily modify Duquesne’s Hardship Fund program benefits and eligibility requirements (May 12 Order). Duquesne was ordered to reflect these changes in its revised 2020 USECP.

On May 23, 2022, Duquesne filed clean and redlined versions of its revised 2020 USECP (May 23 Compliance Filing). To date, no protests or other responsive pleadings have been filed relative to the May 23 Compliance Filing. On June 8, 2022, the Commission’s Bureau of Consumer Services (BCS) issued a Secretarial Letter (June 8 Secretarial Letter) identifying several areas where the May 23 Compliance Filing was inconsistent with the Commission’s April 21 and May 12 Orders. BCS also noted that Duquesne had not filed a letter confirming that the Hardship Fund policies on the DEF website were consistent with its 2020 USECP, as directed in the April 21 Order. Duquesne was directed to file and serve a further revised 2020 USECP addressing the compliance issues and to confirm the DEF website is consistent with its 2020 USECP. June 8 Secretarial Letter at 4.

On June 28, 2022, Duquesne filed clean and redlined versions of its further revised 2020 USECP (June 28 Compliance Filing).<sup>1</sup> Duquesne also confirmed that the DEF website accurately reflects the Hardship Fund policies articulated in the May 23 Compliance Filing.

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<sup>1</sup> All references to the June 28 Compliance Filing refer to the clean version of the further revised 2020 USECP.

May 23 Compliance Filing Cover Letter at 1. To date, no protests or other responsive pleadings have been filed relative to the June 28 Compliance Filing.

BCS has reviewed the June 28 Compliance Filing and has identified one Hardship Fund grant provision where the June 28 Compliance Filing is non-compliant with the Commission's April 21 and May 12 Orders. BCS has also identified one remaining inconsistency between the Hardship Fund policies in Duquesne's 2020 USECP and those listed on the DEF website. In all other respects, BCS finds the June 28 Compliance Filing to be in compliance with the April 21 and May 12 Orders.

#### *Hardship Fund Grant Non-Compliance*

Duquesne has added an additional Hardship Fund provision limiting hardship fund grants to \$100 if a customer has a delinquent balance of \$100 or less in 2022 and 2023.<sup>2</sup> June 28 Compliance Filing at 27.

The Commission did not approve this provision in its April 21 and May 12 Orders. Accordingly, this new provision must be removed from the revised 2020 USECP to be in compliance with the Commission's Orders. If Duquesne wishes to pursue adding this provision, it will need to file a petition to amend its 2020 USECP.

#### *Hardship Fund Policies on the DEF Website Non-Compliance*

Consistent with the Commission's May 12 Order, the June 28 Compliance filing states that Duquesne is waiving a balance requirement for Hardship Fund applicants in 2022 and 2023. June 28 Compliance Filing at 27, May 12 Order at 5, OP #1. The provisions on the DEF website<sup>3</sup> are, however, still inconsistent with the Hardship Fund eligibility policies in Duquesne's 2020 USECP. DEF's website states that Duquesne customers under the age of 62 must currently have an outstanding utility bill balance of at least \$100 to qualify for a Hardship Fund grant. This program requirement is not consistent with the June 28 Compliance Filing, nor is it compliant with the Hardship Fund provisions approved in the May 12 Order.

Duquesne is directed to address this Hardship Fund compliance issue and file and serve a letter within 20 days confirming that the DEF website accurately reflects Duquesne's Hardship Fund policies and requirements as outlined in its 2020 USECP.

#### *Conclusion*

Accordingly, Duquesne is directed to file and serve a further revised 2020 USECP within 20 days of the entry date of this Secretarial Letter addressing the compliance issue noted above. Duquesne is also directed to address the Hardship Fund compliance issue on the DEF website and file and serve a letter confirming the website is consistent with the 2020 USECP within 20

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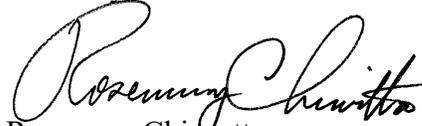
<sup>2</sup> "For customers whose delinquent balances are \$100 or less, the hardship grant will be capped at \$100 during 2022 and 2023." June 28 Compliance Filing at 27.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.dollarenergy.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/2022-PA-Fact-Sheet-Duquesne-Light-Company.pdf>.

days of the entry date of this Secretarial Letter. Parties have the right to seek reconsideration of this staff action. These staff determinations relative to the review of the June 28 Compliance Filing and DEF website will be deemed to be the final action of the Commission unless an appeal of this staff determination is sought from the Commission within 20 days after service of this Secretarial Letter. *See* 52 Pa. Code § 5.44 (relating to petitions for appeal from actions of the staff).

If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Johnson at [jennifjohn@pa.gov](mailto:jennifjohn@pa.gov).

Sincerely,



Rosemary Chiavetta  
Secretary

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