



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
400 NORTH STREET, HARRISBURG, PA 17120

June 21, 2024

IN REPLY PLEASE
REFER TO OUR FILE

In Re: F-2023-3045158

(SEE ATTACHED LIST)

Cari Picciano v. Philadelphia Gas Works

Appeal of BCS Decision - Billing Dispute

MEDIATION NOTICE

The parties have consented to use the mediation process in the above-captioned matter.

A mediation session will be held as follows:

Date: Tuesday, August 6, 2024

Time: 11:00 A.M.

Location: Hearing Room 1
4th Floor
801 Market Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107

Mediator: Mediator Teri-Lee Rhoades
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
Office of Administrative Law Judge
Commonwealth Keystone Building 2nd FL West
400 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120
Telephone: (717) 787-5633
Fax: (717) 787-0481
Email: terhoades@pa.gov

Mediation is an informal, non-adjudicatory process. The mediator does not give advice, represent any party, evaluate or make a decision. Instead, the mediator serves as an impartial facilitator who helps the parties resolve their disputes. In other words, mediation is a process which allows the parties to control the outcome of their dispute, as opposed to a hearing where an Administrative Law Judge and the Commission control the outcome.

Moreover, mediation is different from a settlement conference which is based on competitive negotiations. In mediation, the parties agree to work together toward a final resolution of their differences considering how any solution must address the interests of all parties. The focus is not to determine fault, assign blame, or deal with past issues. Rather, the focus is on the future and on a consensual resolution that the parties can live with.

Because mediation is not an on-the-record proceeding, there will be no court reporter. Everything that takes place during mediation is, and must remain, confidential, unless otherwise provided for by law, regulation or rule. This applies to everyone who is in the room. A copy of this rule is attached. An agreement reached between or among the parties becomes public upon submission of the mediator's brief procedural report to a judge (or Commission) when the agreement is attached to the report.

The parties must act in good faith. A page entitled "Good Faith Factors for Mediation Sessions" is attached. If you feel that you cannot comply with these factors, please let the mediator know well in advance of the mediation session, because it may be that the case will not be suitable for mediation at the scheduled time.

Additionally, the parties must follow the Pennsylvania Bar Association Working Rules for Professionalism regarding their conduct. A copy of the Rules is also attached.

(INDICATE CONFLICTS). The mediator has stated that these factors will have no effect on her ability to be fair and impartial in this case. Nevertheless, if you object to having her serve as the mediator, or if you are aware of any other factors which could affect her ability to be impartial, please let her know promptly.

In the meantime, please attempt to resolve the issues involved prior to the mediation session.

Any questions regarding the mediation should be directed to the mediator at the telephone number provided above.

Any party who needs accommodation for a disability in order to participate in the mediation session may request one. Please call the scheduling office at the Public Utility Commission at least five (5) business days prior to the mediation session.

If you require an interpreter to participate in the session, we will make every reasonable effort to have an interpreter present. Please call the scheduling office at the Public Utility Commission at least ten (10) business days prior to the mediation session to submit your request.

- Scheduling Office: (717) 787-1399
- Persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired may call a relay operator at 711.

MEDIATION CONFIDENTIALITY RULE

1. Everything that takes place during mediation is confidential.
2. Persons attending the mediation, either in-person or otherwise, shall not disclose anything that takes place in mediation, unless otherwise provided for by law, regulation or rule.
3. EXCEPTION

Attorneys and other person attending the mediation may disclose what takes place in mediation to clients, co-counsel, principals and counsel of the parties, but only after receiving due assurances that the recipients will honor the confidentiality of the information.

GOOD FAITH FACTORS FOR MEDIATION SESSIONS

GOOD FAITH INCLUDES, AMONG OTHER THINGS:

1. GIVING THE PARTICIPANTS, PRIOR TO THE FIRST SESSION, ALL THE INFORMATION THEY NEED TO KNOW IN ORDER TO RESOLVE THE CASE. (The Commission believes “that formal discovery procedures are not appropriate in the informal [mediation] process.” *Pa. Bul., Vol. 25, No. 20*, May 20, 1995, p. 1996. Therefore, discoverable information should be discovered informally.)

2. BEING FULLY PREPARED WITH FULL KNOWLEDGE OF THE CASE AND WITH POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS FOR RESOLVING THE CASE.

3. BEING WILLING TO CREATE OPTIONS TO RESOLVE A MATTER, CONSIDERING HOW THE SOLUTION MUST ADDRESS THE INTERESTS OF ALL THE PARTIES, AS OPPOSED TO TAKING AN UNYIELDING POSITION.

4. HAVING THE PERSON WITH THE AUTHORITY TO APPROVE THE TERMS FOR RESOLUTION ATTEND THE MEDIATION SESSION, OR, AT LEAST, BE AVAILABLE TO CONFER WITH THE PARTY’S REPRESENTATIVE DURING THE MEDIATION REGARDING APPROVAL OF TERMS.

5. DEMONSTRATING A WILLINGNESS TO LISTEN AND TO UNDERSTAND THE PERSPECTIVES OF THE OTHER PARTIES.

6. BEING WILLING TO SPEND THE ENTIRE DAY, IF NECESSARY, AT THE SESSION.

PBA Working Rules for Professionalism

The practice of law is a profession, a genuine calling inspired with service to the system of justice, not a common business enterprise. The quality of the profession is only as worthy as the character of the people who practice it.

Self-esteem, shared respect for each other, the clients we serve, the judges and the officers with whom we work, are essential to it.

Civility is a virtue, not a shortcoming. Willingness to temper zeal with respect for society's interest in preserving responsible judicial process will help to preserve it.

Unwritten rules of professional courtesy have long sustained us. Since they are sometimes forgotten, or sometimes ignored, we should set them down again and conscientiously observe them.

1. Treat with civility the lawyers, clients, opposing parties, the Court, and all the officials with whom we work. Professional courtesy is compatible with vigorous advocacy and zealous representation.
2. Communications are lifelines. Keep the lines open. Telephone calls and correspondence are a two-way channel; respond to them promptly.
3. Respect other lawyers' schedules as your own. Seek agreement on meetings, depositions, hearings and trial dates. A reasonable request for a scheduling accommodation should never be unreasonably refused.
4. Be punctual in appointments, communications and in honoring scheduled appearances. Neglect and tardiness are demeaning to others and to the judicial system.
5. Procedural rules are necessary to judicial order and decorum. Be mindful that pleadings, discovery processes and motions cost time and money. They should not be heedlessly used. If an adversary is entitled to something, provide it without unnecessary formalities.
6. Grant extensions of time when they are reasonable and when they will not have a material, adverse effect on your client's interest.
7. Resolve differences through negotiation, expeditiously and without needless expense.
8. Enjoy what you are doing and the company you keep. You and the world will be better for it.

Beyond all this, the respect of our peers and the society which we serve is the ultimate measure of responsible professional conduct.

F-2023-3045158 - CARI PICCIANO v. PHILADELPHIA GAS WORKS

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