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January 13, 2025

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

Rosemary Chiavetta, Secretary
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street, 2nd Floor North
P.O. Box 3265
Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265

**Re: Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission v. The York Water Company
Docket Nos. R-2022-3031340, et al.**

Dear Secretary Chiavetta:

Enclosed for filing on behalf of The York Water Company (“York Water” or the “Company”) in the above-captioned proceeding is the Company’s Report on Call Center Performance. Under Paragraph 53 of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (“Commission”) approved Settlement in the Company’s 2022 Base Rate Case, York Water must “provide a report 30 days prior to filing its next base rate case or within two years, whichever is sooner, that will show each year’s annual call center performance compared to the 2020 call center performance results.”¹ The Company also “agree[d] to take such action as required to meet its 2020 call center performance annual results prior to filing its next base rate case or within two years, whichever is sooner.”²

York Water respectfully submits this report pursuant to Paragraph 53 of the 2022 Base Rate Case Settlement, which sets forth: (1) the required call center performance data; and (2) details on the internal changes and improvements that the Company has made to improve its call center’s performance and achieve higher level customer service.

Copies of this filing are being provided to all parties in York Water’s 2022 Base Rate Case, as indicated on the Certificate of Service.

¹ *Pa. PUC v. York Water Co.*, Docket Nos. R-2022-3031340, *et al.*, p. 15 (Recommended Decision dated Dec. 6, 2022), *adopted*, Docket Nos. R-2022-3031340, *et al.* (Order entered Jan. 12, 2023).

² *Id.*

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Respectfully submitted,



Devin Ryan

DR
Enclosures

cc: Certificate of Service

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the foregoing has been served upon the following persons, in the manner indicated, in accordance with the requirements of 52 Pa. Code § 1.54 (relating to service by a participant).

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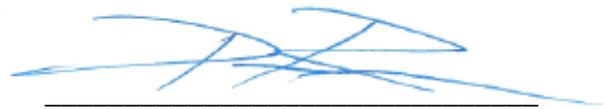
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Date: January 13, 2025



Devin T. Ryan



The York Water Company

REPORT ON CALL CENTER PERFORMANCE

Under Paragraph 53 of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (“PUC”) approved Settlement in The York Water Company’s (“York Water” or the “Company”) 2022 Base Rate Case, York Water must “provide a report 30 days prior to filing its next base rate case or within two years, whichever is sooner, that will show each year’s annual call center performance compared to the 2020 call center performance results.”¹ The Company also “agree[d] to take such action as required to meet its 2020 call center performance annual results prior to filing its next base rate case or within two years, whichever is sooner.”²

York Water respectfully submits this report pursuant to Paragraph 53 of the 2022 Base Rate Case Settlement, which sets forth: (1) the required call center performance data; and (2) details on the internal changes and improvements that the Company has made to improve its call center’s performance and achieve higher level customer service.

Relevant Call Center Data

York Water, like other PUC-regulated water utilities, tracks the following statistics in its customer care call center:

- Number of calls
- Number of calls answered
- Number of calls abandoned
- Number of calls redirected
- Number of calls to voicemail
- Percentage of calls answered
- Percentage of calls abandoned
- Percentage of calls to voicemail
- Average Time to Answer*³
- Intervals of Time to Answer*

¹ *Pa. PUC v. York Water Co.*, Docket Nos. R-2022-3031340, *et al.*, p. 15 (Recommended Decision dated Dec. 6, 2022), *adopted*, Docket Nos. R-2022-3031340, *et al.* (Order entered Jan. 12, 2023).

² *Id.*

³ The Average Time to Answer and Interval percentages are for calls that are answered only, not all incoming calls.



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Call Center Data

The table below sets forth the Company’s call center performance data for the years 2019-2024:

										Time to Answer : Intervals				
	# Inbound Calls	# Answered	# Abandoned	# Redirected	# Disc	% Answered	% Abandoned	To Vmail Total	% To Vmail	Avg. Time to Answer	< 24 sec.	25-120 sec.	121-240 sec.	> 241 sec
2019	56529	50899	3811	1781	4	90.04%	6.63%	1808	3.13%	1:18	61.62%	18.11%	9.84%	10.51%
2020	44238	40652	2310	1260	16	91.89%	4.94%	1260	2.60%	1:03	66.83%	17.56%	7.99%	7.62%
										Time to Answer : Intervals				
	# Inbound Calls	# Answered	# Abandoned	# Redirected	# Disc	% Answered	% Abandoned	To Vmail Total	% To Vmail	Avg. Time to Answer	< 30 sec.	31-120 sec.	121-240 sec.	> 241 sec
2021	60126	45451	8814	5844	17	75.59%	14.57%	5831	9.63%	4:28	29.47%	15.99%	15.24%	39.30%
2022	62996	44511	10720	7736	29	71.23%	16.72%	7729	11.99%	5:50	22.52%	12.71%	15.06%	49.71%
2023	63558	44104	13311	6094	49	72.93%	17.29%	6081	9.67%	3:58	45.48%	11.16%	10.00%	31.76%
2024	75315	39966	20830	14466	35	53.07%	27.66%	14460	20.99%	0:06	96.62%	0.07%	0.08%	0.22%

For York Water, the year 2020 was an outlier in call center performance, principally due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission put several customer protections in place, such as issuing an Emergency Order on March 13, 2020, which prohibited utilities from terminating customers’ service pending then-Governor Wolf’s Proclamation of Disaster Emergency.⁴ These customer protections significantly reduced the customer contacts/inquiries York Water received that year. For example, as seen in the table above, York Water’s customer contacts in 2020 were 30.56% lower than the average of the customer contacts received in 2019, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024.⁵ As a result, the Company’s customer service representatives (“CSRs”) had expanded bandwidth when responding to customer inquiries than they would otherwise in normal years. Thus, York Water believes that the other years besides 2020 provide a more appropriate gauge of its call center’s performance and improvement. The Company reevaluated its capacity and determined that the 2020 performance is not a realistic goal for the customer service department in light of the significant increase in number of inbound calls. York Water is implementing and enhancing performance metrics to gain improved performance over the next 2.5 years and as the Company transitions to a new Enterprise Resource Program (“ERP”) system, which includes a customer service platform.

Furthermore, in analyzing the call center performance data for 2019-2024, the Company notes the following:

⁴ The Commission ultimately lifted the emergency moratorium on November 9, 2020, allowing utilities to restart their termination and collection efforts.

⁵ Inbound contacts in 2020 = 44,238; Annual average of inbound contacts across 2019 and 2021-2024 = 63,705.



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- 2023 and 2024 inbound calls were higher than on average in 2019, 2021, and 2022, yet York Water improved on its performance in calls answered in less than 30 seconds, even achieving 96.62% of calls answered in less than 30 seconds in 2024.
- Over the 2019-2024 period, York Water received 75,315 inbound calls, which was more than any other year in that period, with even 11,757 more inbound calls than the previous high of 63,558 inbound calls in 2023.
- The average time to answer has been significantly quicker, with 0:06 seconds in 2024 compared to: (1) an average of 3:52 across 2019, 2021, and 2022; and (2) 3:58 in 2023.

In addition, York Water's call center performance data should be viewed within the Company's overall, high quality customer service. Specifically, the Company consistently: (1) has a low number of customer complaints every year; and (2) has the lowest justified customer complaint rate of the water and wastewater utilities regulated by the Commission. In fact, not a single customer filed a formal complaint against York Water with the Commission in 2024. Also, the Company recently completed a customer satisfaction survey, where 78% of customers expressed satisfaction with the Company's availability of customer service representatives during the week.⁶ The Company believes its CSRs' responses to customer contacts/inquiries is a large reason for those achievements.

Moreover, as explained in the following sections, York Water has undertaken several efforts to enhance and expand its customer service department, including the call center and online access to services and information, all of which were designed to improve customer service and the customer experience. Thus, while call center performance is an important data point, other metrics and information must be considered when developing an accurate and complete picture of the Company's customer service performance.

Customer Service Department Changes and Challenges

Since 2020, York Water has experienced several changes and challenges in its Customer Service Department, to which the Company is taking actions in response. For example:

⁶In the same survey, 89% of responsive York Water customers expressed approval of the overall utility services York Water provides.



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- Personnel turnover since 2020 has increased from the Company's historically low level, reflecting national trends, particularly for entry-level hourly positions like CSRs.
- Since 2021, York Water has increased the pay schedule for its CSRs to better align with the labor market in the region in order to improve retention.
- Since 2020, York Water's water and wastewater customer base has increased from 72,681 connected customers to 79,262 connected customers in September 2024, increasing the daily demand on the Company's CSRs.
- At the end of 2020, York Water began refuse and wastewater billing for the City of York, which increased the demand on the Company's Customer Service Department personnel.
- In 2022, Pennsylvania-American Water Company ("PAWC") purchased the York City sewer system, and York Water received many inquiries from its York City water customers related to their sewer service, placing a significantly higher burden on York Water's Customer Service Department for approximately 9 months.
- At one point in 2024, the Customer Service Department had 3 openings to fill due to both departures and promotions out of the Department for CSRs and field CSRs. Specifically, through October 2024, the Department was down 3 team members for half a month, down 2 team members for a total of 4.5 months, down 1 team member for 4 months, and fully staffed for just 1 month. Each time the Company loses and replaces a team member, there is a minimum of 2-3 weeks of training once they start on site, which requires the dedication of at least one senior team member for training. This should be added into the 'down time' described above. As a result, for much of 2024, the Department was working with fewer representatives than the full compliment.
- The departures and promotions mentioned above had a direct impact on the Company's ability to respond to customer inquiries. York Water has spent 112.5 hours of overtime to catch up on responses to customer inquiries. During this period, inquiries were triaged based upon rational priority of public health, reliability of service, and general questions/requests.

Call Center Enhancements and Online Access Improvements

The Company also made various enhancements to its call center and online resources for customers, including the following:



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- In 2024, York Water restructured its call center’s phone system to ensure customers are connected to the right company representative as quickly as possible. Customers now call in and select the option that fits their need and are directed to a designated responsible representative for that need. This is contributing to higher customer satisfaction. Some of the restructuring includes:
 - Providing a Spanish language queue option and an English language queue option to filter to a representative who speaks the preferred language, thereby reducing transfer and wait times for not only the alternative language customer but for all customers; and
 - Having designated Department options for various specified needs and services, such as emergencies, main extensions, new connections, and meter exchanges, enabling the Company to direct callers to the specific individuals responsible for those needs and services and, consequently, reducing call transfers and wait times.
- York Water also launched a new website in December 2023. This site, along with the mobile version, was designed to encourage more customer self-service on-line. York Water has achieved that through electronic form submissions, easier connectivity for payments, access to closer in-time system information, and substantially more customer-centric information and updates – all with an eye toward greater digital access to information, resources, and tools for customers. Collectively, these online resources are designed to reduce the number of incoming calls and inquiries and, by extension, the strain on York Water’s CSRs. The new website also contains Spanish versions of customer information and the ability to opt for 10 language translations of most website content.
- In 2024, York Water also created a new Marketing/Communications position and hired a motivated, experienced professional in early 2024. While on its face unrelated, this position does a great deal to support the Customer Service Department in responding to customer inquiries and providing timely and relevant customer-centric, clear information into the digital space and on the Company’s website. For example, York Water has implemented an enhanced boil water advisory protocol that incorporates much more frequent and detailed customer communications and notices on its website to keep customers informed about changing circumstances. This position has supported York Water’s customers by creating clear and accessible messaging and tools to obtain information and supporting customer service and the Company in issuing clear and consistent information to customers. The Company anticipates that this functionality will



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only provide more and more robust collaboration and support into the future. It has been an extremely positive partnership and a remarkable step forward for customer service satisfaction. In the future, York Water may create self-designed customer service surveys and other opportunities for feedback, so that the Company can further refine and improve its services.

- York Water also created a new Senior Customer Experience Manager position in 2024 to focus on building the strength and consistency of the Company's customer experience throughout the Company. Since joining the Company, she has helped shape an enhanced CSR orientation program, established performance metrics for representatives, and worked with the Department leadership to formalize the field representative training program. These activities help ensure all customers are provided with the best experience when working with York Water.
- The Company also created the Senior Customer Service Representative position in 2024. The Senior Customer Service Representative is a frontline Subject Matter Expert, responsible to be an experienced resource for CSRs and for directly assisting customers with unique or complex inquiries, issues, and requests. This role involves a high level of customer interaction, problem-solving, and communication, making the Senior Customer Service Representative an important bridge between the Customer Service Department and the Company's customers.
- 1 additional CSR position was added to the Department in 2023.
- 2 field CSRs positions were added to the Department in 2020, with 1 additional field CSR position added to the Department in 2023.
- York Water expects to add 2 to 3 more CSR positions in the Department within the next 2 years.
- In 2024, the Department developed a cadence of regular and structured team meetings, briefings, and updates to ensure the customer service team is informed and can clearly communicate, gain alignment, and take swift action, when needed. This allows the team to be proactive because every team member is informed, prepared, and empowered to act decisively.

York Water believes that all of these enhancements to the Customer Service Department, collaboration within the Company, and the additional tools now available to its personnel have enabled its Customer Service Department to perform on par with prior year's averages in spite of periodic staff losses and the concurrent steady growth and complexity of its customer base and services.



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Final Statement

Over the past few years, York Water has been committed to improve its customer service performance in the face of significant challenges. Reflecting on the past years, York Water seen remarkable progress in 2024 in both the development of individual talent and collective teamwork. In the past years, the Company has focused on creating a strong foundation, meeting industry standards, and developing a cohesive team. This year, the Customer Service Department has elevated department training, skills and teamwork. The enhanced training program, new leadership ideas, and consistent communication has enabled CSRs to be more effective and efficient while continuing to provide high quality customer service. York Water also notes that it implemented all these changes and improvements while dealing with the September 1, 2024 retirement of its former Vice President of Customer Service, who served for 32 years.

As York Water prepares to welcome a new Vice President of Customer Service on March 3, 2025, the Company is excited to consciously focus significant effort to continue to enhance, refine, and improve our customer service. York Water remains committed to refining its best practices and exploring industry proven enhancements. The Company's experience makes us stronger, and our relationship with our customers is important to the customer experience. York Water is ready to take on new challenges, knowing that progress and improvement in the service we provide will sustain us as one of Pennsylvania's leading utility companies in customer experience.